



# Staying ahead in a fiercely challenging environment

## RIVER ISLAND

### Products and Services

- Fixed lines for River Island stores
- Mobile connections
- BlackBerry™ devices
- Mobile data
- O2 mobile broadband
- O2 home broadband

We've made significant cost savings, both by switching and by regular and thorough reviews. The O2 tools to manage voice calls and line rental are superb.

Martin Goldstein  
Head of Purchasing at River Island

### Challenge

One of the UK's most successful high street retailers stays ahead in a fiercely challenging environment.

### The Solution

O2 demonstrates how to reduce cost and complexity both now and for the future.

### Introduction

River Island is one of the UK's most successful High Street retailers, with over 250 stores and 10,000 employees across the UK. The chain has expanded internationally to operate in Ireland and throughout Asia, the Middle East and Europe. The company was set up in 1948, operating from a small shop in London trading as Lewis Separates and eventually becoming River Island in 1988. The group is a family concern, led by entrepreneur and chairman Bernard Lewis, while its collections are designed by a team of in-house designers.

In 2010 River Island introduced Children's wear – known as "Boys & Girls" – which has proved very popular. As well as its retail stores, River Island operates an e-commerce site delivering to over 100 countries worldwide.

### The Challenge

River Island has been successful in business a long time, partly thanks to its skill at anticipating and adapting its business model to benefit from market conditions, particularly through effective procurement. The company takes a proactive approach to identifying and reducing expenditure and, naturally, looked at managing its communications more effectively.

Martin Goldstein Head of Purchasing at River Island said "In a fast-moving, competitive environment like ours, we have to be able to rely on our communications. I was determined to make sure that standards were kept high but equally that we squeezed the greatest possible value from our budget."



## RIVER ISLAND

### The Solution

For mobile, says Martin Goldstein, "There are a handful of suppliers who are up to the mark: We decided to go with O2 because O2 seemed to be much more flexible and open to innovation."

River Island is particularly satisfied with the account management provided by O2, so it was an easy decision to move the company's fixed lines to O2 in October 2010.

Martin Goldstein recalls "We were slightly apprehensive about the switchover as it was just before Christmas, our busiest period. But the move went very smoothly. It was extremely well managed by O2."

River Island has realised its intention to manage costs better. Martin Goldstein says "We've made significant cost savings, both by switching and by regular and thorough reviews. The O2 tools to manage voice calls and line rental are superb."

River Island believes that O2 is helping to keep the business on a steady course for the future. Martin Goldstein says "Our O2 account manager is very proactive, making sure we're using the available technology most effectively. We particularly like the way he provides us with an overview of the status of our business. We have a monthly meeting to talk about what's going on now and in the future which is always interesting and useful."

O2 also provides River Island with innovative ideas and expertise in the retail arena. "Not only is O2 a major telecoms player, it's a retailer as well which is relevant. O2 is looking at things in the future; it's one step ahead and ready to share its retail ideas and experiences."

For all that, O2 hasn't neglected the basics. Martin Goldstein says "The O2 network is very reliable. There's extremely good coverage particularly in London: that's one of O2's major strengths. They really seem to care about the strength of the network and what it can do."

### Results

- Simplified communication
- Significant cost savings
- Reliable mobile network
- Confidence in the future

In a fast-moving, competitive environment like ours, we have to be able to rely on our communications. We can rely on O2 to manage our communications and help us plan for the future."

Martin Goldstein  
Head of Purchasing at River Island