

Pathmark invests in smart scanners

Pathmark, a coast grocery retailer on the East Coast of the US updated their The Challenge point-of-sale system with Datalogic's Magellan® 8500, a "smart scanner" with Datalogic's patented SurroundScan® technology, the industry's first 6-sided scanning system, and the All-Weighs® Platter scanner/scale. The result was decreased product shrink, better ergonomics, and increased overall productivity.



The challenge

Pathmark was in the process of bringing their entire front-end systems up to industry standards and wanted scanners to integrate with their new front-end IBM SurePOS™ 750 units, which were replacing 10-year-old cash registers in all 144 Pathmark stores.

"What they really wanted to do was introduce technologies that would make their front-end system efficient and effective and as fast as they possibly could," explains Dave Sullivan, Senior Vice President of Worldwide Sales, Services, and Marketing for Datalogic Scanning, Inc..

Product shrink was also a major concern for Pathmark. The culprit was weighing inaccuracies produced by the outdated technology of their current scanner scales.

Pathmark also wanted to invest in a scanner that was poised to take advantage of Reduced Space Symbology, or RSS. The tiny bar code can hold up to 74 digits and 41 alphanumeric characters, and can carry product "lifespan" information, especially crucial for perishable products like meat and produce.

THE SOLUTION

A fresh start

Datalogic evaluated their concerns and introduced them to the Magellan 8500. Pathmark was pleased with the Magellan 8500 bi-optic scanner's design and performance, and especially with Datalogic's patented All-Weighs® Platter. "Pathmark did very extensive testing," says Datalogic's Sullivan.

"They tested several competitive products and actually tested both the Datalogic MagellanSL® and the Magellan 8500 bi-optic scanners. They found that the 8500 model enabled their checkers to be faster and more productive."

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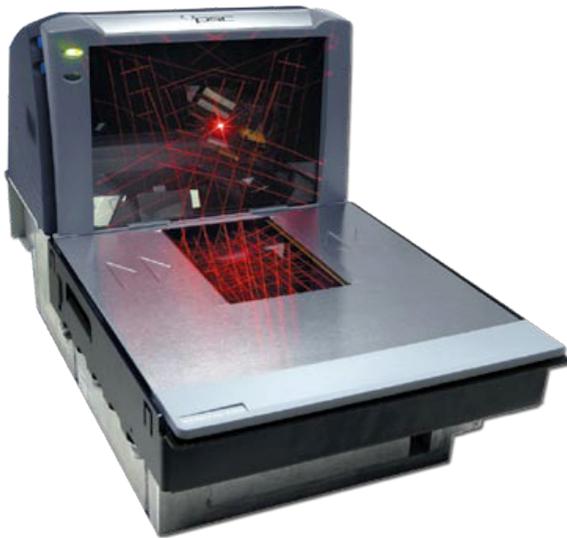
Trimming the waste

Besides the Magellan 8500 scanner's speed, the All-Weighs® Platter design was a major selling point. The integrated scanner/scale design allows oversized produce to rest against the vertical surface, as well as the horizontal, and the Magellan® Produce Rail™ keeps produce from resting on the counter. Both features greatly improve accuracy in weighing, thereby reducing shrink. "By using the All-Weighs Platter, and using it properly, Pathmark checkers were able to have a significant impact on product shrink, especially in the area of produce weighing", says Sullivan.

Correcting bad habits

SurroundScan has improved cashier performance in other ways as well, specifically in the area of ergonomics. Pathmark has worked hard to rid its checkers of bad scanning habits. "Cashiers are dragging product across the scanner once and getting the read," says Bob Shoening, Pathmark Chief Information Officer. "They no longer have to twist their wrists to manipulate the item to re-scan product. We managed to untrain the twisting motion they learned years ago, and they are telling us they feel better" ⁽¹⁾. That's not only good for a cashier's health, it's good for increased front-end throughput as well.

⁽¹⁾ Quoted from STORES Magazine: October 2002



RSS and the future

Shoening says that although Pathmark isn't working on RSS pilots yet, the Magellan 8500 bi-optic scanners keep them consistent with where the industry is headed. As RSS becomes a bigger part of supply chain solutions, scanners that are RSS capable will be poised and ready to take advantage of the new symbology.

"Datalogic Scanning is leading the charge," says Sullivan. "Our Magellan family of bi-optic scanners have long been able to read RSS. The Magellan 8500 reads RSS better than any other scanner on the market and we've proven that in side-by-side tests at customer sites, as well as with our own internal testing".

RESULTS

Everyone wins

Obtaining and maintaining a competitive advantage is difficult for retailers, and with the fast pace of supermarket checkout, increasing cashier productivity is a big part of a positive customer

experience. Pathmark achieved its objective of increased front-end performance with the 2,150 Magellan 8500 units installed, with plenty of benefit to customers and cashiers alike.

“The Datalogic Magellan 8500 fixed scanners are providing superior performance and significantly reduces the potential for lost sales”, said Shoening, adding, “Our cashiers are more productive and tell us they feel better”.