



ZEBRA CASE STUDY

The Bargain! Shop Updates Product Pricing in Seconds with In-Aisle Printing

Major Canadian Retailer Rapidly Rolls Out New Pricing, Freeing Clerks to Focus on Store Appearance and Customer Service

About The Bargain! Shop

The Bargain! Shop (TB!S) is a rapidly expanding, Canadian-owned retail chain with over 250 stores, located mainly in smaller communities and neighborhoods across the country. It carries a wide range of brand-name quality products for the home and family: electronics, housewares, gift items, home textiles, food and snacks, health and beauty, cleaning items, as well as clothing and footwear for the whole family. TB!S' pricing policy is simple: It guarantees the lowest prices, everyday. For more information, visit www.thebargainshop.com.

Challenge

Savvy shoppers do their homework. They're looking for the best value—quality products for the lowest prices. TB!S consistently meets those customer demands by offering brand-name products at the guaranteed lowest prices. Those in small communities and neighborhoods across Canada go there for the best deals on everything from toasters to cameras to children's clothing.

That means TB!S must constantly evaluate and change pricing in order to remain competitive. The store stocks about 60 percent of its inventory with items that shoppers can buy from week to week. New, rotating items comprise the remaining items—made available as TB!S finds deals and passes them on to customers.

With thousands of SKUs, changing frequently, TB!S needed a flexible pricing strategy. Previously, store clerks consulted the service desk for prices, and then selected from pre-printed shelf labels. Those labels only included a price without a product description, which often confused customers about which items corresponded with which shelf prices.

When TB!S executive Clinton Wolff, VP & CFO with responsibility for IT, worked in a store for a day, he saw firsthand the inefficiency of the approach. "Customers had to ask about prices, clerks made more trips to the service desk to verify pricing, and checking inventory took longer than necessary," Wolff said.

Solution

With inventory changing weekly, TB!S sought a better way to manage pricing and stock visibility. The company turned to qdata, a bar coding, RFID and wireless solutions company, for an integrated solution. qdata created and implemented a plan that TB!S could easily replicate and deploy across all stores.

Tied closely with the company's point-of-sale and merchandise management system, the system is currently in use in all stores. It includes a wireless access point, Motorola® MC3090 series mobile terminals and Zebra® QL 320 wireless mobile printers. "The main criteria for a printer were ease of use, portability and durability," said Randall F. Bunka, VP of sales at qdata.



QL320 Plus™ Mobile Printer



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Through the wireless access point, the wireless printer and mobile terminal are integrated to the POS server to get up-to-date price information. The clerks can now scan the product on the spot, and compare the price marked on the shelf with the price display on the mobile terminal. If there is a mismatch, the clerks can then quickly create new, corrected or updated shelf labels using the Zebra mobile printers.

Results

Stores typically reduce their price marking costs between 25 percent and 40 percent by integrating price management software with mobile computing and printing operations like Zebra printers, according to SofTechnics, a leading provider of retail pricing and inventory management software.

For TB!S, in-aisle printing with Zebra enhances pricing accuracy, ensuring customers see and pay the correct prices. TB!S also enacts new pricing much faster than before—typically in just a few seconds per product. In the past, clerks needed approximately four hours to mark down all products for major sales. Now, they price multiple sale items in two hours.

“Markdown execution is faster, more reliable and less error-prone,” Wolff said. “We save a significant amount of time on labeling and inventory.”

Ultimately, that frees TB!S clerks to devote more time to improving the store's appearance and serving customers. In turn, customers have taken notice. “Customer feedback has improved and our secret shopper scores have increased since we deployed the new system,” Wolff said.

TB!S is just completing the opening of about 70 new stores that were acquired when it purchased leases from another chain. From the outset, those locations are outfitted with the integrated in-aisle pricing solutions that have been so successful in its existing stores. Based on the success with qdata's solutions and service, TB!S worked closely with qdata to procure, stage and send out hardware in various stages to the new stores.

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