

THE CUSTOMER'S POS

INTEGRATING APPLICATIONS AT THE FRONT END CAN CREATE A CONSUMER-CENTRIC EXPERIENCE, STUDY SAYS.



By Deena M. Amato-McCoy

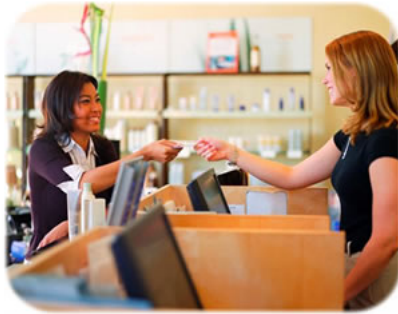
Shoppers are known to give their loyalty to companies that can provide the best customer service. However, some companies may be unknowingly killing customer service during the checkout process. By creating a point-of-sale (POS) that can support customer satisfaction and revenue growth, retailers are in a better position to transition to consumer-centric point-of-service.

This message was highlighted in the "Migrating to Customer-Centric Point-of-Service" study, released by Aberdeen Group. The Boston-based consulting firm examined the POS usage and experiences of more than 175 retailers.

According to Aberdeen, retailers that successfully implemented a customer-centric front end have POS systems that achieve three goals: They meet customer-satisfaction goals, they quickly check out shoppers, and they increase transaction sizes year over year.

One factor that may be keeping retailers from hitting these goals is the age

of their POS systems. For example, 60% of participating retailers were operating POS systems that were more than five years old. Worse, 35% of this segment had systems more than 10 years old. Since these systems often cannot integrate well with next-generation POS software, hardware and peripherals, retailers may be jeopardizing quick and easy checkout, which negatively affects the customer experience.



As a result, the study urged retailers to restructure front-end processes. This includes upgrading software, hardware and peripherals. But upgrading the core of the front end is only the beginning.

Next, retailers must integrate the POS with other customer process-management applications, the study said. Fifty percent of laggards (or the survey's bottom 30% of performing companies) operate in a silo. They do not integrate POS with CRM (customer-relationship management), inventory, cross-channel or other enterprise applications. Conversely, best-in-class companies, or the top 20% of performers, are two times more likely than other surveyed retailers to add these cutting-edge customer-centric capabilities.

7 Tips to Prevent POS System Data Loss



By Jeff Haefner,
Point of Sale Software Buyers Guide

Tip 1: Back up your POS software data EVERY day! To protect your data, you need install a good tape back up, external hard drive, zip drive or at least a CDR-W drive.

Tip 2: Schedule your back up to run every night and ALWAYS check the log. Schedule the back up to automatically run at night then check your back up log for errors the next day.

Tip 3: Don't overwrite your back up every time. It's a good idea to keep your back up information for several days by rotating the media.

Tip 4: Take your data home. If you take the previous day's back up media home you'll always have your valuable business information safe, even if there's a fire or natural disaster.

Tip 5: Test the back up once a month. Avoid bad back ups by simply restoring your last back up to an alternate location on the hard drive.

Tip 6: Install a UPS and surge protector on your computer. Power surges and brown outs can weaken or destroy computer equipment causing data corruption or your entire system to fail.

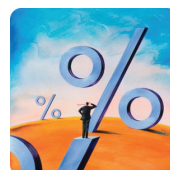
Tip 7: For maximum reliability install RAID or mirrored hard drives. RAID or mirrored hard drives keep your server running even if you have a hard drive failure.



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By moving to an integrated front end, retailers can create a unified customer experience, foster easier payment across the enterprise, and consistently fulfill customer needs at POS the study advised.

Once systems are integrated, the study said that retailers should create a process for headquarters to gather, create and distribute front-end reports regarding POS and front-end customer-experience performance by store. This information leads to more cross-functional collaboration between IT, marketing and store operations as they work to further improve the POS experience.

Laggards that may not be convinced by the value of this investment can again take a lesson from best-in-class counterparts. These skilled companies are almost three times more likely than other companies to measure and manage customer satisfaction as a key metric of customer experience at their stores' front ends.

Meet the Staff at Retail Technology Experts

Get to know **Fabiana L. Rodriguez**
Quality Assurance Department Coordinator



Fabiana has been working with Retail Technology Experts for more than five years, and we are proud to say that she has been selected to be in charge of our new Quality Assurance Department which was created to improve our overall services making our client's satisfaction our top priority. Fabiana is looking forward to ensuring a positive experience for all clients and is sure that her past years working with the Customer Service Department will make this initiative a complete success. Fabiana is from Uruguay and in her free time practices FULL CONTACT KARATE, beware!

To contact Fabiana, please call 1-800-513-5917 ext. 190.

ROI Analysis: Part 4

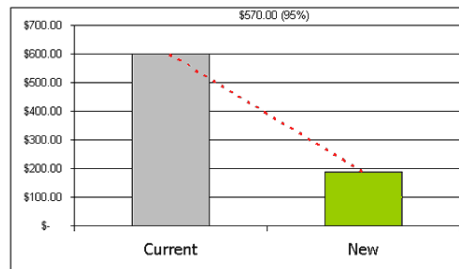


by Kyle Ritter

ROI Analysis: Part 4

In our final installation of our 4 Part ROI analysis article, we will show you how you can prevent under-rings, which are often a form of employee theft by giving discounts and reduced costs to friends and family. We cover how you and your managers can generate reports in all manner of productivity based on employee sales, inventory, area positioning, and more. Finally, learn about how point of sale and accounting software integration will help generate you the most significant ROI.

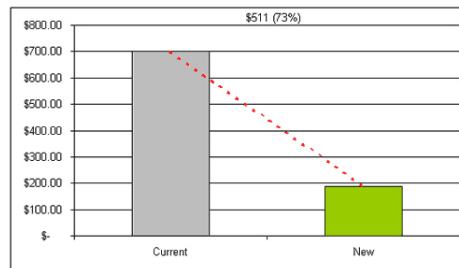
Under-rings



Virtually eliminate under-rings through automation.

One of the major benefits to the ca|micro retail automation solution is that you can almost completely eliminate under-rings. With tradition cash register there is no way to reconcile a shortage between the number of products sold and the actual amount charged per item. With a POS terminal the employee does not have the ability to manually enter a price and is forced to either scan the item or enter it from the database and the prices cannot be changed unless they are given security rights to do so. The reality of an employee charging \$5 for a \$20 item is completely gone

Management Reports



Having the right information to make the key business decisions is critical the success of any organization.

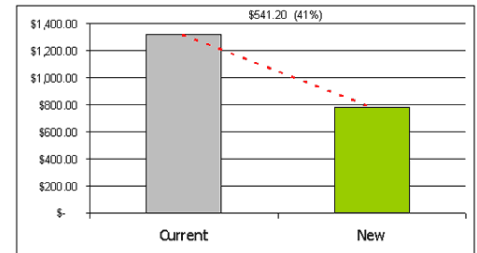
The benefits of having access to reports that show the key business metrics is absolutely vital to the success of a retail store. Being able to send trends developing and track sales



activities is critical. Some of the key benefits include having reports on:

- Top selling items.
- Top producing employees
- Most product departments or product categories.
- Most profitable items.
- Least profitable items.
- Best suppliers.
- Best and worst customers.
- Customers who have not purchased recently.
- Highest margin products.
- Hundreds of other reports and key business data that is available through completely customizable reports.

Accounting Integration



Reduce bookkeeping expenses and get access to up-to-date accounting information in a real-time basis.

The ca|micro solution will enable any retail business to have every transaction directly entered into back-office accounting program. QuickBooks, Quicken, Peachtree and other major accounting programs are all supported. There is an immediate impact in lower bookkeeping expenses, as well as the ability to access key financial information that is up-to-date and accurate. A retail business will know exactly what daily cash flows and accounts receivable are, as well as daily balances sheets at the end of each day.

RETAIL OPTIMIZER

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