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## ACOSTA'S MOBILE SOLUTION SPEEDS TIME-TO-SHELF FOR CANDYMAKER JUST BORN.

### Zebra Printer Helps Cut In-Store Time and Get Inventory on Its Way

#### About Acosta Sales & Marketing

Founded in 1927, Acosta has grown from a local food broker to become the leading outsourced sales and marketing agency serving consumer packaged goods companies and retailers across the United States and Canada. The company's integrated approach engages shoppers at every point along the path to purchase and ensures that clients' products are strategically positioned to most effectively convert shoppers at the shelf.

#### Challenge

You may not know the name Just Born, but you likely know their candy. The national confectionary company makes names such as Mike and Ike's, Hot Tamales and marshmallow Peeps.

A couple of years ago, the company recognized an untapped opportunity—to get its candies into more convenience stores. Just Born turned to Acosta, which brings technology, expertise and connections with tens of thousands of stores nationwide, including an attractive segment of 30,000 independent convenience stores.

Once in stores, Acosta must help keep Just Born's regular and seasonal candies on shelves. When Acosta reps check inventory at stores, they need a quick and simple way to print shelf tags and UPC-coded reorder lists for store managers.

#### Solution

Acosta chose Zebra® printers to complement its mobile technology solution. Zebra's compact, lightweight QL 220 Plus™ direct thermal mobile printer enables real-time wireless printing at store shelves.

When evaluating printers, Acosta looked at various options and determined that Zebra offered key advantages. Perhaps most important to Acosta and Just Born, the printers are uniquely compatible with the various UPC codes used by different retailers.

"One of the reasons that Acosta chose Zebra printers was the flexibility of the device," said Calvin Johnson, Vice President of Retail Services at Acosta. "We can print up to 13 different barcodes so far."



### Zebra® QL 220 Plus™

#### Customer

Acosta Sales & Marketing

#### Industry

Marketing

#### Challenge

Increase speed-to-shelf and streamline the process for putting Just Born candies on convenience store shelves.

#### Zebra Solution

Zebra® QL 220 Plus™

#### Results

- Reduces in-store account management time by approximately 30 percent.
- Cuts down the time to process

**ACOSTA**  
SALES & MARKETING

"We can also print suggested orders from one printer, switch a roll of paper in a flash and be able to print a shelf tag. Very flexible. The units are also ruggedized, they're wireless and they have excellent battery life," he added.

Field testing gave the company even more confidence in the QL 220 Plus models. "Zebra gave us equipment to test. We went to the field and tried to break it, if you will, and came back and said, 'this is the solution that works for us,'" Johnson said.

Additionally, the model supports a higher level of wireless security for transferring sensitive data and processes complex labels up to four times faster than other printers.

### Keeping Shelves Stocked

With collaboration with Zebra, Acosta rolled out the solution smoothly for Just Born accounts. "This was a very big move for Acosta and the support level from Zebra has been great," Johnson said.

The wireless technology allows field staff to print anywhere, any time. When at stores, Acosta's retail representatives use a scanner to identify the Just Born items that are on the shelf and those that should be there but are not. The rep then prints a shelf tag to hold space for items not there.

With the store manager's permission, Acosta scans that shelf tag and sends the order to a distributor so that the product comes back on the very next truck. At the end of the visit, the data is transmitted to a central database and shared with the manufacturer.

"We're using the technology to hold that space and get an order back to the store so that the store

will have the primary items needed to sell," Johnson said.

Before, Acosta reps handwrote product re-order lists for store managers. Acosta now prints receipt-size re-order lists on the spot—with retailer-specific UPC codes—using their scanners, netbooks and Zebra printers. They then hand lists to store managers, who in turn simply scan the codes and place the order.

### Results

Through the engagement with Acosta, Just Born has built relationships—and sales—with that coveted group of independent convenience stores. The addition of Zebra printers made Acosta's already efficient technology solution even more effective. "We really saw this as a best practices enhancement," Johnson said.

By eliminating paperwork, the mobile solution reduces the amount of time that Acosta reps spend by approximately 30 percent, giving them more time to work store shelves. Plus, they are able to provide much better SKU-level reporting to clients.

Even more importantly, Acosta has increased the speed to shelf of Just Born candies. In the past, holding shelf space and communicating orders quickly was challenging. Today, Acosta reps scan shelf tags and transmit the orders, cutting speed to shelf from the old paper-based system.

"This has truly cut down the time of processing new orders for us as a manufacturer through the distributor from anywhere from four to six weeks to almost instantaneous. It's a tremendous, tremendous time saver and very, very efficient," said Stu Harris, Vice President Retail Services, Convenience Division, Just Born candy company.



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