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Zebra's MP7000 Bioptic Scanner Accelerates Store Checkout at Rapidly Expanding European Non-Food Discount Retailer

ABOUT ACTION

Action is a fast-growing international non-food discounter with over 1,100 stores in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Austria and Poland. Action employs over 40,000 people and its total sales reached €2.7 billion in 2016. It stocks in excess of 6,000 products, of which approximately one third are own-brand; other items are supplied by leading brands down to smaller private companies. The product range is dynamic,changes regularly, with more than 150 new articles being added on a weekly basis and falls into 14 categories: decoration, DIY, toys & entertainment, stationery & hobby, multimedia, household, garden & outdoor, laundry & cleaning, food & drink, personal care, pet, sports, clothing and linens. Action is able to charge extremely low prices due to its large scale and efficient purchasing, optimal distribution and the cost-conscious culture across the organisation.

Challenge

Action keeps its store formula virtually the same in every country; this enables it to open new outlets quickly and achieve a rapid ROI, often within the first year. Action needs partners who can efficiently help with its growth and ensure it has the best systems in place to deliver optimal customer service; Zebra and Centric are such partners.

Centric is a tier one premium Zebra partner and has worked with Zebra for over twenty years. It offers Software Solutions, IT Outsourcing, Business Process Outsourcing and Staffing Services and employs more than 4,300 qualified professionals across Europe.

The three companies have worked together to test the best-in-class, most reliable retail devices with the fastest processing speeds and lowest power consumption for POS and on the shop floor. Ease of installation and maintenance were also key requirements, along with a competitive TCO.

Solution

Following a testing phase, where Action looked at solutions from two suppliers, Centric is now installing Zebra's MP7000 at checkout in all new and refurbished Action stores for high-volume product scanning. For larger and heavier items, which are not placed on the POS conveyor belt, cashiers use the linked Zebra DS4308 Handheld Scanners to scan barcodes. The scanners link into the CTAC Retail Suite POS software Action has deployed, which in turn links into Action's SAP back office systems.

Centric has also deployed Zebra MC3100 and MC3200 Mobile Computers running Windows CE for in-store inventory and reordering. The Zebra ZT230 and ZD410 printers, meanwhile, are used for printing shelf labels. Action has a range of Zebra solutions in its warehouses too, including Zebra's VC70 Vehicle-Mounted Computers, MC9200 Mobile Computers and ZD410 Direct Thermal Desktop Printers. It uses the Zebra devices for a wide range of workforce management, including inventory, order picking, goods in and goods out, and printing barcode labels and dispatch labels. Employees rate the Zebra devices highly, finding them reliable, robust and easy to use.

Centric is responsible for remotely managing and updating all the Zebra devices, in line with its business aim of lowering running costs for retailers through remote management services. It uses Zebra's easy-to-use Scanner Management Service (SMS) to configure the scanners, load parameters, update firmware and query asset data, and

AirWatch® Enterprise Mobility Management for all other Zebra products. Centric is also responsible for maintaining and repairing the Zebra hardware, but Action has a Zebra OneCare coverage plan in place for RMA (Return Material Authorisation) to ensure its investment remains fully operational at all times.

Results

Action's POS Life cycle Management Project has delivered a huge increase in its POS throughput, with the optimal scanning delivered by the MP7000 playing a significant role. Indeed Zebra's most advanced scanning technology is ensuring the instant capture of virtually every electronic and printed barcode. Checkout staff feedback has been excellent; they know they can rely on the fastest, most accurate first-time 'swipe and go' scan and they also appreciate the recessed illumination, easy on their eyes and those of the shoppers. The MP7000s also have various future-proof features such as an optional side scanner, which customers could use to scan their own electronic and physical coupons and loyalty cards, as well as support for the new Digimarc® barcode, which Action could use in the future.

Installation was easy with minimal disruption as, although it has the largest scan zone in this product class, the MP7000 has been designed to fit into existing cash wraps. Moreover, Action estimates that the MP7000s have reduced its TCO by circa 50%, driven by competitive pricing, maximum scanner uptime and up to 25% lower power consumption than similar scanners currently on the market. The solid state build technology means fewer parts and components to service and repair and, with SMS for remote management, and an upper casing that can be removed by hand, maintenance could not be simpler. Jens Burgers summarises, by praising the partnerships: "The after-sales and roll out services provided by Centric and Zebra were optimal, as was the Zebra supply chain. This is crucial, as we are opening five to six new stores every week. These are the types of partners we need, as we continue our rapid expansion across Europe."

> " Our retail formula is simple: small prices, big smiles. We strongly focus on the in-store customer experience and continuously strive to optimise our cost levels to share these benefits with our customers. The lasting, final impression of a shopping trip is checkout; we need the best technology on the market right there, which is why we have deployed the Zebra MP7000 Bioptic Scanner. The scanner is reliable, easy to remotely manage and the fastest on the market, but with lower power consumption than other scanners. What's not to like? And with a small footprint and a good price performance ratio, we have commissioned our partner Centric to install MP7000s in all new outlets and update all our existing stores. Centric has already deployed the MP7000 to five hundred stores, without any delays."
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> **Jens Burgers, IT Director, Action**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: WWW.ZEBRA.COM

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