



Independent Grocers Reduce Time, Cost of Ordering and Labeling

ABOUT C&S WHOLESALE GROCERS

C&S Wholesale Grocers of Keene, N.H., is the largest food wholesaler, and according to Forbes Magazine, the 12th largest privately held company in the United States. The company distributes food to supermarkets, retail stores and military bases across the country. Currently, C&S serves approximately 5,000 stores from more than 50 locations in 15 states. Among its customers are many of America's best-known retail grocers, including Stop & Shop, Giant of Carlisle, Giant of Landover, BI-LO/Winn-Dixie, Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co. (A&P), Kroger, Safeway and Target.

Challenge

As the largest wholesale grocery supply company (by revenue) in the U.S., C&S helps both independently owned retailers and national supermarket chains procure high-quality, low-cost goods for their customers. Currently, C&S supplies customers with over 95,000

different products from more than 50 high-tech facilities, delivering everything from seafood to soup to dish washing liquid.

For these small stores, quick, efficient ordering is critical, and C&S offers a full range of best-in-class store management services to help them run their businesses efficiently and profitably. The company set out to simplify inventory management for its customers.

Previously, C&S stores ordered inventory using hard copy price books and a handheld wand. The company printed shelf labels and mailed them to each store weekly. If stores needed to replace labels, they had to wait until the next week. The entire process was cumbersome and ordering and printing were not integrated.

"Our outdated technology became an obstacle for ordering," said Chad Alexander of C&S Wholesale Grocers.

SUMMARY



Customer
C&S Wholesale Grocers
Keene, NH



Partner
Optical Phusion
Littleton, MA

Industry
Retail

Challenge

C&S Wholesale Grocers sought to expedite and improve the accuracy of the ordering and labeling process for the 5,000 stores it serves

Solution

- Optical Phusion's SnapStock software
- Zebra Windows-based handheld barcode readers
- Zebra® QL220 Plus mobile printers

Results

- C&S delivers a smooth inventory management system to its stores, helping the company reduce the time and cost to order and label store shelves
- It takes new users less than half an hour to learn the SnapStock system
- Stores complete orders faster and have the flexibility to print high-quality labels at any time

SUCCESS STORY

C&S WHOLESALE GROCERS

Solution

C&S partnered with Zebra solutions partner Optical Phusion Inc. (OPI) to update its inventory management solution. OPI provided an intelligent, fully integrated ordering system.

Using OPI's SnapStock software, Zebra Windows-based handheld barcode reader, and the Zebra® QL220 Plus mobile printer, C&S Wholesale Grocers' independent customers can quickly scan items or shelf barcodes, check inventory status or place an order right in the aisles, saving time and increasing accuracy.

Zebra's popular QL™ family of direct thermal mobile label printers has built a highly satisfied following based upon its proven drop-resistant durability; user-friendly, productivity-boosting features; and easy integration.

C&S loads the Zebra handheld devices with the thousands of items that a store can order. Every week, the company updates the item information with price changes, weekly specials and new or discontinued items.

The Zebra handheld devices offer user friendly, full-color display touch screens and keyboards. One scan of a barcode and the user sees the product description, number of packs in

the case, case cost, pallet size and whether the item is on sale – all instantly. If an item is discontinued, a substitute item code appears. After the user enters the order, he or she places the unit back in the cradle and the order is transmitted automatically.

Stores use the Zebra QL220 Plus mobile printers anywhere they choose, whether on a cart or fastened on their belts – saving staff the time of going back and forth to a stationary printer to get freshly printed labels.

Results

C&S delivers a smooth inventory management system to its stores, helping the company reduce the time and cost to order and label store shelves. It takes new users less than half an hour to learn the SnapStock system and the system requires minimal tech support. Most issues are resolved in a phone call in five minutes or less.

With the integrated solution, stores complete orders faster and have the flexibility to print high-quality labels at any time.

“It was obvious to C&S that Optical Phusion understands the independent grocer's model,” Alexander said. “With our solution, customers place orders faster, and with more accuracy.”

“Zebra's proven reliability and ruggedness made for easy decision. Zebra offered easy integration to the Zebra handheld and the SnapStock software.”

Scott Arnold
President of
OPI

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