



CASE STUDY

A Supermarket's Recipe For Reducing Labour & Cash Loss

An apg® Case Study with a Multinational Grocery Chain



Ability to identify quickly and accurately what is in the cash drawer 24 hours a day



114 years labor returned to the stores



A more positive working environment

Globally, cash accounts for 16% of all point of sale (POS) transactions. In Europe, it accounts for as much as 60% of POS payments. It is frequently what shoppers pull out of their wallets when making a purchase at a convenience store, gas station, fast-food restaurant, or bakery.

Despite the growth of mobile wallets like Apple Pay and Google Wallet, cash remains the preferred method of payment in a variety of settings. Though digital payment is increasingly common, the U.S. Federal Reserve reports that there is still \$5.4 trillion worth of cash and coins in global circulation as of Dec. 31, 2022.¹ Globally, cash accounts for 16% of all point of sale (POS) transactions.² In Europe, it accounts for as much as 60% of POS payments.³ It is frequently what shoppers pull out of their wallets when making a purchase at a convenience store, gas station, fast-food restaurant, or bakery.

Most merchants still welcome cash gladly, however, managing it and the associated costs, is another matter, especially for big supermarkets. It's a challenge. Handling bills and coins often leads to mistakes at the checkout and the backroom. Cash counts are time consuming, especially when there are discrepancies and multiple lanes, taking staff and managers away from other tasks.

Many retailers use secure cash storage at the POS. This may range from simple mechanical counter cache units to intelligent systems or even to fully safed-rated devices.

These solutions can deliver operational efficiencies by reducing the time needed for skims as well as adding an additional level of security for till operators. Intelligent systems can deliver further benefits such as forgery detection and transactional data, which may be transferred to cash in transit (CIT) or a bank, facilitating the potential for accelerated credit on account.

But one thing is missing from these cash handling solutions: the ability to identify quickly and accurately what is in the cash drawer 24 hours a day.

Luckily, there is a solution. apg's smarttill Cash Management Solution helps retailers better control their cash handling by eliminating the need for manual cash counts and till checks throughout the day. smarttill Intelligent Cash Drawers automatically count coins and bills inside the till after each transaction, notify managers when float top-ups and cash lifts are required, and issue immediate mobile alerts when a discrepancy occurs. This all happens in real time, making it a very powerful cash management tool.

Retailers that standardize on smarttill invariably sing the solution's praises for making their lives better. In one case, a multinational grocery retailer was able to save an average of 30 minutes of staff time per store daily after implementing smarttill. The company, which operates thousands of stores in Europe and Asia, deployed smarttill Intelligent Cash Drawers to simplify cash management and free up staff to better focus on customer service.

Reallocating Wasted Labor

Cash is not presumed to go away anytime soon, and every retail outlet faces the cash handling challenge, an area where the associated costs remain a constant burden. It is often hard to define the scale due to hidden operational costs and poor cash handling data. Cashiers, store managers, and back-office staff must deal with cash day in and day out as the labor rate escalates and the labor pool grows tight.

For one grocery store chain, the smarttill technology that is now in place at over 3,500 checkouts has created a 30-minute daily savings per store — a tremendous outcome. The retailer claims it has eliminated millions of security till checks and millions of till counts for reconciliation purposes per year, equating to well over a million man hours returned to the stores, thanks to the solution's automatic cash-counting capability.

The time that was spent physically moving the cash between the front and the back office, for security checks, reconciliation, and the general management of the float was significant. At this supermarket chain, on average, cashiers spent four minutes per till counting and sorting cash. In most environments, it takes seven minutes on average to count out a drawer before and after shifts which creates bottlenecks that affect customer service and your bottom-line.

Ending the Loss Prevention Headache

The smarttill technology also has spared store managers the awkward task of interviewing employees to investigate cash losses, which makes for a more positive working environment. Honest employees no longer have to be subjected to these uncomfortable conversations because managers no longer have to interview every person who worked at a till where a discrepancy occurred.



As one checkout manager explained, “The cashiers have gotten more confident as they know they will not get tagged on to another person’s mistake.” That’s because the solution keeps a record of each employee’s transactions, giving managers the exact time and date of a till discrepancy.

This capability has other benefits. All transactions are recorded in real time, so if a customer is given the wrong change by mistake, a manager can quickly correct the error just by checking the solution’s electronic logs and verifying the time and date stamp in closed-circuit television (CCTV).

In the backroom, far less time is spent on reconciliation. Managers can put the time they would normally dedicate to cash counts and reconciliation to better uses, such as interacting with customers.



Improving the Shopping Experience

The smarttill technology is an excellent solution to a retailer's cash management woes. With rising labor rates across the globe, retailers stand to benefit from reallocating the man hours saved with smarttill. The solution improves the shopping experience overall; cashiers can spend less time worrying about making mistakes and more time providing a personalized experience. This is a big plus during the age of Amazon, when competition is stronger than ever and retailers are looking to focus on customer service that builds loyalty and delivers growth.

References

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3. European Central Bank, Eurosystem. (2022, December). Study of the payment attitudes of consumers in the euro area (SPACE) - 2022. https://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/ecb_surveys/space/shared/pdf/ecb.spacereport202212~783ffdf46e.en.pdf

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About apg® solutions

apg®, with over 45 years of experience, manufactures a wide range of highly durable and reliable cash drawers that are delivered quickly to the marketplace. apg has built a reputation as the supplier of choice for cash management solutions for retail, grocery, hospitality, and quick serve for thousands of customers throughout the world. Whether it's our general application cash drawer, custom designed solutions, or the smarttill® Intelligent Cash Drawer, our products and brand are differentiated by our ability to deliver innovative technologies that globally enhance efficiency and security at the POS. To learn more about our products, visit <http://www.apgsolutions.com/europe>.

About the smarttill® Cash Management Solution

The smarttill Solution will revolutionize the way you manage cash within your organization, tackling cash handling issues from both sides — the shop floor and the back office — whilst maintaining personal contact with customers. The smarttill® Solution is the next generation in cash drawer technology. It counts the coins and notes within the drawer itself automatically within seconds of the drawer closing and provides powerful back-office reports to optimize and secure your cash management.



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