



## CASE STUDY

# Tech Savvy Convenience Store Features Innovative Cash Handling Technology

An apg® Case Study in Partnership with SPAR



Helps not only with cash loss reduction but also saves valuable management time



Integration with electronic shelf labeling for dynamic pricing



Benefit both the store's ownership and the cashiers

**Convenience stores in the United Kingdom represent a £39.1 billion industry, about the same as industries such as oil and gas. Convenience stores number almost 50,000 and 72% of them are run by independent retailers. These retailers face challenges like future-proofing their businesses and eliminating staff theft. More often than not, the answer to both is technology.**

Overall, convenience stores contribute £10.1 billion of gross added value to the U.K. economy.<sup>1</sup> There are nearly 50,000 U.K. convenience stores and 72% of them are run by independent retailers.<sup>1</sup> These retailers face challenges like future-proofing their businesses and eliminating staff theft. More often than not, the answer to both is technology.

When opening a new store, owners have to make many decisions, including what to sell, how to draw customers and what systems to deploy. Karan Patel was especially interested in frictionless technology when setting up his SPAR convenience store in Tunbridge Wells, UK. He wanted to future-proof the store with modern technology to attract millennials and Gen Z customers.

That meant deploying a fully featured point of sale (POS) system integrated with intelligent drawers, digital signage, a cigarette dispenser, and electronic price labeling. Patel researched available technology and providers before he decided to contact Borehamwood-based MSP Systems Ltd.

“We asked them to give us a complete solution that would integrate with all the new in-store technologies we have, including intelligent labeling, a cigarette display system, and media advertising,” Patel recalls. Having looked at seven other solution providers, while reviewing his options, Patel ultimately chose MSP Systems “because of their reasonable price and a good customer support line.”

His SPAR franchise is family-run and employs three family members and seven part-time workers. Patel wanted technology that would allow him to run the business efficiently and prevent cash loss while also making it attractive to modern consumers, who often make purchase decisions based on digital signage promotions and want to get through the checkout fast.



## Intelligent Cash Drawers

After getting Patel's call, MSP Systems prepared a proposal that included three apg smarttill® Intelligent Cash Drawers integrated with the POS, which also integrates with an intelligent price labeling system. The smarttill Solution records and counts each transaction, tracking discrepancies as they occur in order to resolve them on the spot. In the convenience sector in the UK, the number one cause of internal theft is cash stolen from the till, which is why retailers have invested over £5 million to address staff theft.

These capabilities, says Patel, benefit both the store's ownership and the cashiers. The owners, "know they can track everything their staff does and that any shortages will be recorded." For its part, employees "feel safer that they can't be accused wrongly of losses as everything is recorded in the till."

Having visibility at the POS helps not only with cash loss reduction but also saves valuable management time. According to a Bizdaq report, 87% of UK business owners with young children reported that they were unable to take a yearly holiday due to business commitments; in the same report, shop owners reported working an average of 50.5 hours per week.<sup>2</sup> Due to these demands, time is a precious commodity for them. Currently, Patel's family members do the cashing up in the evening but hope to pass these tasks to other employees. They feel safe in doing this because the smarttill Solution "looks after" the cash.

According to Greg Dockery, Sales Director at MSP Systems, having the smarttill Cash Management Solution in the MSP's sales toolbox increases the value providers can deliver to customers: "More importantly, it makes any proposal MSP makes more well-rounded as we are now offering a complete solution."

## Integrated Digital Signage

Another key component of the SPAR Tunbridge Wells implementation was digital signage. The store has tablet-sized screens on the shelves advertising the day's specials. The screens are positioned strategically; studies show advertising and promotion at the point of decision influence buyer behavior and boost sales. Other promotional screens are placed behind the counter, at the POS stations and in other highly visible places.

## Tobacco Dispenser

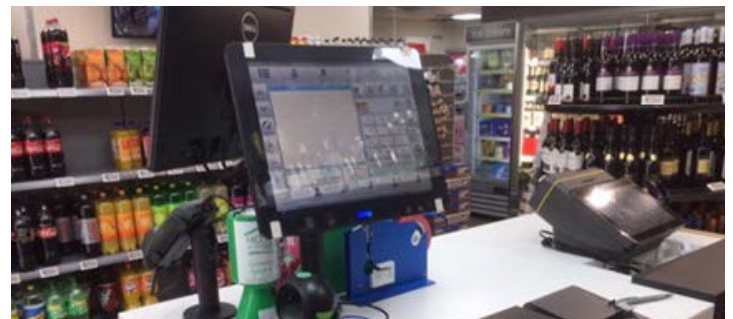
The POS deployed by MSP Systems also integrates with the store's Navarra tobacco dispenser to record sales and stock levels. The dispenser releases a cigarette packet only when prompted by the POS. Nothing leaves the dispenser otherwise. This addresses a major issue faced by UK tobacco sellers; it is estimated that missing cigarette packs stolen by staff cut into sales by 0.3% to 0.7%. While that may seem small, it adds up over time.

## Intelligent Pricing

One of the most advanced features of SPAR Tunbridge Well's POS is integration with electronic shelf labeling for dynamic pricing. As any retailer knows, changing prices on shelves can take hours when done manually. The process is expensive, time-consuming, and error prone. Electronic labeling changes that. When SPAR updates prices, the system automatically changes the labels and updates the POS so that when a price is scanned, it is the same price that appears on the shelf. Pricing errors are eliminated. Another benefit of intelligent pricing is integration with digital signage, enabling screens to immediately show current prices when they are updated.

## Sleek and Smart Retailing

Patel is happy with the results of the technology investments he made. The technology implementation, including the smarttill Intelligent Cash Drawers, took about two days. The use of modern automated technology provided better cash control while improving the checkout process and overall customer experience.



Patel says he is happy with how smoothly the process was and feels confident his store is well equipped with the right POS technology to meet the current and future needs of its customers.

## References

1. UK convenience store Statistics 2020. Premierline. (2021, January 14). <https://www.premierline.co.uk/insight-hub/uk-convenience-store-statistics-2020.html>
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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](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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