



CASE STUDY

From Counting Cash to Counting on Operational Excellence

An apg® Case Study in Partnership with the Costcutter Supermarkets



Calculates cash amounts, eliminating note counter



Footage is time-stamped, for quick till disputes



One day installation and a straightforward training process

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The Costcutter store in Porthleven, UK, is a busy place, especially in the summer months when tourists flock to the seaside town. The staff were spending more than two hours daily counting money, calculating cash floats and topping up tills, which hurt productivity. With multiple cashiers using the same tills, it was difficult to hold anyone accountable for discrepancies.

To boost efficiency, the owner of the Porthleven Costcutter store started looking at new cash management options. It so happened Costcutter Supermarkets Group was trying out the smarttill® Intelligent Cash Drawer from Cash Bases Ltd, a Newhaven, UK, company that merged with Minneapolis-based apg® in 2015. When the franchise's owner saw the drawer in action, he liked what he saw and decided to deploy the smarttill Solution.

A solution consisting of four 460 Flip Lid smarttill Intelligent Cash Drawers and the smarttill Cash Manager application was deployed, replacing an older set of Cash Bases drawers.

Eating Up Time

Prior to the installation of the smarttill Solution, cash reconciliation consumed as much as two hours daily. It took 45 minutes to count cash, establish cash lift and top-up values, and reset the drawer's inserts. At day's end, cashiers would take the inserts up a set of stairs to a back office for counting. The inserts were then refilled with the next day's cash floats.

When a cashier ran out of coins during the day, a supervisor would take a £20 note and exchange it for coins in the back room. "This involved running with money up and down the stairs, which is not very effective and it eats up time. This could happen up to 10 times in a day," says store manager Andy Pengelly. At busy times, it interrupted customer service.

Another issue involved cash lifts. Three times a day, a supervisor would lift cash from the drawers, stuff it into envelopes, write down the amount and place it in a safe. The next day, the cash was fed through a mechanical note counter as part of the reconciliation process.



Cash Loss Solution

Even though the store didn't have much of a cash loss problem, Mr. Pengelly says, company policy calls for investigating discrepancies of £5 or more. With multiple cashiers using the same till, it was hard to attribute a discrepancy to anyone. Even when consulting security CCTV footage, the culprit might not be obvious.

With smarttill in place, footage is timestamped and store managers can quickly identify any till disputes in the CCTV footage — a task that normally would be laborious and consume many hours. That's no longer an issue. The smarttill Solution keeps accurate counts and a record of who is using the till. "It is not about not trusting, but rather about genuine errors and supporting your staff," he says. Mr. Pengelly expects smarttill will reduce cash losses to zero.

The smarttill Solution also solves customer disputes. If a customer says he or she received change for, say, £10 instead of £20, the smarttill Cash Manager Software can tell immediately if the customer is right. In the past, the customer would be asked to come back the next day after reconciliation. It was inconvenient for customers and awkward for employees, but now the smarttill Solution serves as an independent witness.

Operational Improvements

With smarttill in place, employees "don't carry money around the store for counting purposes anymore," says Mr. Pengelly. The smarttill Solution calculates cash amounts, eliminating the need to remove individual coin and note inserts everyday, which saves time. The note counter has been retired.

"With the smarttill Intelligent Cash Drawer, any time cash goes in or out of the till, it is checked, counted and recorded. In the past, we only checked the till during the morning reconciliation," Mr. Pengelly says. Now when reconciliation reports are printed out, they accurately show the real float value, and no longer the expected calculated cash value. When a float top-up is needed, smarttill Cash Manager Software uses a traffic light-like system to tell a supervisor a certain denomination is running low (yellow light) on any of the tills. "When he goes out to the checkouts next time, he picks up the needed cash and drops it into the till. This is preventative and causes no customer interruptions because change never runs out."

In addition, the smarttill Solution automatically records cash lifts and generates a report that goes in the envelope with the money. The report serves as a backup to daily reconciliation reports.



Quick Installation

Installing the smarttill Solution took one day. It started with the least busy POS and moved up to the busiest. "It was smooth without any disruption to customer service," Mr. Pengelly says.

Staff training was a straightforward process, mostly involving cashiers adjusting to a new insert layout with different note and coin locations. They also had to learn a few new key commands, as well as changes to the float and cash lift processes.

"Employees embraced the solution because it saves time and speeds up transactions," Mr. Pengelly says. "The smarttill Intelligent Cash Drawers haven't changed their job at all, but now they get a receipt at the end of their shift showing them the accuracy of their job, which is a plus."

Mr. Pengelly says the time savings made possible by the smarttill Solution has allowed him to reassign staff to other tasks he had to cram into his day. Overall, smarttill has been a positive addition, making the store more efficient and improving customer service. As such, Mr. Pengelly believes the Porthleven store will serve as a model for other Costcutter stores.

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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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