

Price Checkers and Digital Signage Can Provide Data to Customers

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While price checking scanners have been improving the customer experience for years, new models also can be used for digital signage and marketing, with enhanced reliability for reducing downtime.

With today's tight pocketbooks and hectic pace, retail customers value accurate, convenient pricing as a critical part of the shopping experience, and an enhanced experience overall. In addition, they appreciate other forms of electronic data communication. Two keys are electronic price verification systems and digital signage, according to the "10th Annual POS (Point-of-Sale) Benchmarking Survey: Successful Retailers Get Creative."

The report, conducted in 2009 by LakeWest Group, a Cleveland-based retail and consumer management consulting firm, surveyed the top 100 retailers. The survey found that half of the top 100 retailers plan incremental increases in software, hardware, network and training budgets to implement technology designed to improve the customer experience, build brand loyalty and maximize profitability.

"In this challenging environment, best-in-class retailers must focus on the customer experience," Ken Morris, chief executive officer and president of LakeWest Group, said in a press release announcing the

survey. "Consumers are spending more cautiously and investing in research of products, services and brands. Once the customer enters the store the retailer needs to provide the expected unique and delightful experience to keep them from shopping elsewhere."

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Morris also says that most successful retailers continue to find creative ways to ensure that customers remain loyal even in these challenging times.

Convenience is priceless

Many successful retailers tout the benefits of price checkers and digital signage as a way to offer customers the convenience they demand. Technology also allows more convenient ways for retailers to control pricing, inventory control and marketing.

Price verification systems and digital signage provide valuable information to customers at a glance. Plus, they can pump up profits. Not only do such devices make the shopping experience more efficient and enjoyable for customers, but using reliable technology in the right way also can build brand loyalty, improve operational efficiency and reduce labor and marketing costs.

With electronic price verification systems, retailers can quickly and easily update prices — no more changing price stickers or installing paper signs.

Likewise, digital signs make it easier for retailers to market to customers. Digital messages can be tailored based on the device's location, the time of day, inventory levels or special events such as sales and holiday promotions.

Making a decision

More than 60 percent of shoppers make their final decisions in the store, according to a recent survey conducted by OgilvyAction, an international marketing services agency. Other studies show that effective technology such as price checkers and digital signage can substantially boost sales.

Digital signage and convenient price checkers can make those decisions easier for customers and entice them to purchase products retailers want to promote.

Before investing in technology and installing price verification systems and digital signage, it's crucial for retailers to consider these key factors:

- **Size.** Find a device that fits the space and other needs.



Price checkers, like the one seen above, provide valuable information to customers at a glance, as well as allowing retailers to control pricing, inventory control and marketing.

- **Flexibility.** Part of the appeal of digital signage and price checkers is that information can be updated quickly. Finding a system that serves more than one purpose is an ideal way to mesh flexibility and profitability.
- **Reliability.** Invest in price verification systems and digital signage from reliable suppliers with top-notch technical support.
- **Affordability.** Prices are coming down on many scanners and digital signs. Retailers should shop around to find the best prices and products to boost their business.

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Some price checkers are able to serve other roles. When idle between customer scans, the units continue to operate and can be used for digital signage or other

applications to engage customers and enhance the shopping experience, right at the point of purchase.

“Having a price verification system that serves more than one purpose allows retailers to get more bang for their buck,” said Mike Kearby, president of AML, a Euless, Texas-based hardware manufacturer. “Using a price verification system that doubles as digital signage and can also be used for an array of other applications can keep customers informed, engaged and on the move ... all with an overall higher return-on-investment for retailers.”

***About the sponsor:** AML, founded in 1983, was selected by Business Solutions magazine as a 2009 Best Channel Vendor; in the Data Collection Hardware category and ranked highly for channel friendliness, service/support and adequate margins.*