



SUMMARY

Customer
ahlsell

Ahlsell AB

Partner
retailonly

Retail Only

OPTISCAN

Optiscan AB

Industry

HVAC & Plumbing, Electrical and Tools & Supplies Wholesale

Challenge

Ahlsell wanted to introduce efficient, easy-to-use self-scanning, traditionally used in retail, for its trade customers.

Solution

- MC18 & MC17 Personal Shoppers
- Zebra OneCare Support Services
- Zebra OneCare Visibility Services, including Operational Visibility Service (OVS) Connect and SOTI® MobiControl
- Retail Only Shop & Drop PSS (Personal Shopping Solution) Software
- Ahlsell Charging Rack Displays designed by Optiscan

Results

- Ahlsell Mobile Self-Scanning clients enjoy an enhanced, fast, convenient shopping experience resulting in improved customer satisfaction
- The solution encompasses reliable, easy-to-use, recognised hardware and software from the supermarket sector, which has resulted in no need for training and excellent user take-up
- The bespoke B2B solution includes features such as client-specific pricing and project allocation
- Store staff are freed up to serve customers and share knowledge, rather than for product and price confirmations
- Ahlsell has seen an improvement in purchased product identification, which consequently leads to more accurate stock replenishment and invoicing
- The PSS solution is flexible and also being used by store staff for inventory and price checking; automating these processes has resulted in significant time savings, improved efficiencies and increased productivity
- Users love the bigger, higher-resolution screen of the Zebra MC18 Personal Shoppers, the faster processing and the better Wi-Fi connectivity
- Via Zebra OVS and SOTI MobiControl, Optiscan can ensure the solution is working optimally for Ahlsell, by remotely managing, updating and securing the MC18 Personal Shoppers

An Industry First In The Nordics: B2B Trade Supplier Launches A Mobile Self-Scanning Solution To Enhance The In-Store Experience For Its Customers

Ahlsell is the leading Nordic distributor of products, tools and supplies to installers, contractors, facility managers, industry, energy companies and the public sector. With 5,800 skilled employees, over 230 stores and 3 central warehouses, it is committed to its customer promise: Ahlsell makes it easier to be professional! Ahlsell is an innovative company and, as such, it is the first company in its sector in the Nordics to launch a self-scanning PSS (Personal Shopping Solution) in-store.

Challenge

Ahlsell works with a huge number of trade customers, all on different pricing brackets; consequently no prices are displayed in-store. The purchasing process was, therefore, quite complicated and customers did not have an accurate real-time overview of their spend: they had to either take a note of the barcode displayed on the shelf, ask a member of staff, or the cashier had to cross-reference against a brochure, which did not always result in the correct item being invoiced.

Ahlsell wanted a faster, more efficient and enhanced shopping experience for its loyal customers who visit the store regularly; it decided to implement a bespoke PSS solution to meet its specific pricing requirements, with recognition factor and a good user take-up being key drivers.

Solution

Knowing Retail Only's self-scanning and self-service solutions from the Scandinavian supermarket sector, Ahlsell decided to transfer and adapt this model to its B2B stores and is now working with Retail Only, a Zebra ISV, to deploy a bespoke version of its Shop & Drop PSS software at the majority of its stores across the Nordics. And Optiscan AB, a Zebra Premium Partner, supplies the Zebra MC18 Personal Shoppers, and previously the MC17s, services and support.

Retail Only has adapted the user interface of its retail PSS solution developed on Microsoft.net, so each client, once they have picked up their MC18 Personal Shopper and scanned their Ahlsell card, can scan shelf barcodes to see individualised prices and product information, as well as allocate purchases to particular projects; this allows for a more independent and informed shopping experience. The customer can pass the scanner to the cashier or scan an end-of-trip code, which will generate an order number and order details both on the MC18 screen and in Ahlsell's back office systems; this can then be invoiced via email or post, either to the trade client or their end customer.

Optiscan, who has 30 years of experience providing high-quality mobility solutions to improve its customers' productivity and operational quality, has worked with Ahlsell for 10 years. Optiscan delivers a complete plug and play system for Ahlsell. Firstly it stages

and configures the devices with the Shop & Drop application, Zebra OVS Connect, SOTI® MobiControl and the store IP address before mounting them in the charging rack displays it has designed and delivering them to the stores. Optiscan is delivering into stores every month – sometimes to new stores, sometimes to existing stores who are replacing their fleet of MC17s; most stores take between one and four displays. Optiscan offers first line support for Ahlsell. However, most hardware servicing, software updates, security and maintenance is now remotely managed by Optiscan via OVS Connect and SOTI MobiControl. Kalle Andersson, Key Account Manager, Optiscan, comments: “Reducing device returns and being able to update software and fix problems and minor issues on Ahlsell’s mobile devices remotely before Ahlsell even knows there is a problem is, quite frankly, a complete blessing.” And this offering is further supported by a Zebra OneCare Support Service contract.

Store teams are now also using the PSS solution for ongoing inventory checks and replacing its paper-based processes has led to significantly improved stock management and faster inventory checks for Ahlsell.

Results

Self-scanning has a huge market share in Sweden and is a must-have in the retail sector; it is therefore inevitable that PSS solutions will move into other markets. And this bespoke deployment has perfectly demonstrated the flexibility of a traditionally retail solution being successfully deployed in the wholesale sector.

Ahlsell’s customers are enjoying a faster, more transparent shopping experience and they will continue to reap further benefits, such as easy access to product information, recommended accessories and mounting instructions, as Ahlsell continues to develop its PSS solution in the future. Ahlsell itself is enjoying maximum solution uptime, improved accuracy in product recognition and subsequent invoicing, an increase in staff productivity and efficiency, and improved stock and inventory management.

The project has been such a success that Retail Only, Optiscan and Zebra Technologies are now collaborating on pilot projects to allocate further in-store tasks, such as goods receipt and ordering, to the Zebra MC18s or to Zebra’s TC56 Touch Computers.



“Self-scanning is very prevalent in the supermarket sector in Sweden; customers simply expect to be given the option to shop with self-scanning in-store. However, why should the current digitalisation trend be exclusive to retail? We could see the potential benefits of a similar solution in our B2B stores and our Shop & Drop solution is now improving customer satisfaction and expediting the in-store experience; it’s all about making the whole purchasing and invoicing process quick and easy for our customers, whatever size account they have. Moreover, our staff can now concentrate on advising customers, rather than spending time researching products and prices. The solution has been so successful that our teams are now using it for various in-store processes too.”

Johan Lundén, Manager Retail Sweden, Ahlsell AB

For more information, please visit: www.zebra.com, www.retailonly.se and www.optiscangroup.com



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