



ZEBRA SCANNERS WITH NEBRASKA BOOK COMPANY REDEFINES CUSTOMER SERVICE AND IMPROVES EFFICIENCIES FOR THE OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE



“Zebra scanners help our cashiers move quickly without multiple passes on the bar codes. Particularly in our merchandise-apparel section, the cashiers like the fact that the Zebra DS9808 scans quickly, at all angles, and it’s easy to pick out a specific bar code on a sheet of barcodes.”
— Torsten Pihl, I.S. Coordinator, Oregon State University Bookstore

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW: OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE, INC.

Launched in 1914 as a co-op, the Oregon State University (OSU) Bookstore is an independent, non-profit corporation managed by a board of directors consisting of OSU students, faculty, and staff. The OSU Bookstore has a 50,000 square foot main campus location and a textbook warehouse facility in Corvallis, Oregon. Two additional retail locations in Keizer, Oregon and Portland, Oregon, known as Beaver Fan Shops™, specialize in apparel and OSU team merchandise.

The challenge: Massive spikes in retail sales volume drive the need for faster, more efficient retail POS scanning

At the start of each quarter, as nearly 22,000 students return to campus to prepare for classes, the OSU Bookstore deploys up to 15 additional POS lanes to handle the massive increase in customer volume. As many as 150 bookstore employees staff 35 POS lanes to help students purchase a wide range of items including textbooks, lab supplies, computers, and clothing.

Another peak in volume occurs during football season. When the OSU Beavers play at home, the population of Corvallis can nearly double from approximately 45,000 to 90,000 people, and crowds of fans jam the bookstore to buy Beavers commemorative items.

“Many of the point of sale stations run non-stop on game days—we could have tens of thousands of transactions across our locations on those Saturdays,” said Torsten Pihl, I.S. Coordinator, OSU Bookstore.

Like other busy retailers, the OSU Bookstore planned to upgrade from cash registers to a computer-based point-of-sale (POS) system. For this strategic move, the OSU Bookstore turned to its partner for POS and inventory applications, the Nebraska Book Company.

CUSTOMER PROFILE



Company

Oregon State University (OSU) Bookstore

Location

Corvallis, Oregon (USA)

Industry

Retail

Zebra products

- Zebra DS9808 Hybrid Presentation Imager and the Zebra LS4278 Laser Scanner

Applications

- Retail Point of sale (POS), inventory management solution and text book shelving/stocking.

Partner

- Nebraska Book Company

Benefits

- Faster, easier bar code scanning and enhanced customer service at the POS, delivering the flexibility of handheld and hands-free capabilities for various tasks, and providing future-proofing for digital imaging, virtual commerce, mobilecoupons and RFID at the POS.



The solution: Zebra and Nebraska Book Company point-of-sale solution

Nebraska Book Company (NBC) has designed, developed and supported computer software for university and college bookstores for more than 20 years, and was ready to provide an effective solution for the POS/inventory requirements of the OSU Bookstore. Working the Zebra, Nebraska Book Company thoroughly tested and certified the Zebra’s newest generation of POS scanners.

Nebraska Book Company’s POS system offered certain advantages to OSU over the leading competitors as it was developed expressly for college retail operations. The Nebraska Book POS system leverages best-of-breed technology, including Zebra bar code scanners, to provide a system that maximizes productivity for the OSU Bookstore. The Zebra bar code scanners enhance usability for point-of-sale, textbook buyback, receiving and item lookup within the Nebraska POS system. All processes within the POS system update in real time.

The OSU Bookstore chose the DS9808 hybrid presentation imager and the Zebra LS4278 cordless bar code scanner to work with Nebraska Book Company software. Pihl and his senior support engineer at the OSU Bookstore performed the installation and testing of the Zebra bar code scanners. Nebraska Book Company’s POS system with Zebra bar code scanners is now in place across the bookstore’s three locations and approximately 30 checkout

stations. The system is also used for scanning new books into inventory before they are shelved.

The installation of the DS9808 and LS4278 scanners marks the third generation of POS equipment the OSU Bookstore has deployed from Zebra. The ruggedness of the Zebra bar code scanners was important to the OSU Bookstore, especially for heavy usage during peak times. “We rely on Zebra’s standard factory warranty for all of our POS scanners, but we have not used it because the Zebra scanners have always worked,” Pihl said.

The DS9808 is a hybrid model, and this flexibility has been valuable to the OSU Bookstore. “Generally the DS9808 is sitting on checkout counter and the cashier presents merchandise to the scanner using both hands, but when the cashier picks up the DS9808, it goes automatically into handheld scanning mode. For items that are too small to apply bar codes, we use laminated sheets with bar coded menu list. Sometimes in the past, cashiers had to cover the other bar codes with their hands to scan just one specific bar code, but the DS9808 has an excellent laser aiming pattern, so the cashiers can easily select a single bar code from the menu and scan it.”

The LS4278 cordless bar code scanner is ideal for the process of scanning new books into the OSU Bookstore inventory system before they are shelved. In the past, the employee handling this task using a traditional Zebra LS4004 scanner with 12 foot long coiled interface cable to the host PC. With the LS4278

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cordless scanner the task is much easier, less time consuming and the work environment is safer with the elimination of the cumbersome 12 foot cable. Now the books remain stacked on the floor and the employee simply moves the LS4278 from book to book – and the scanner can operate up to 30 feet from the host PC giving bookstore employees freedom and flexibility.

The benefits: Enhanced efficiency and customer service

With the Zebra and Nebraska Book Company solution in place, the OSU Bookstore has an efficient all-electronic system for its POS and warehouse needs. The database and automated functions facilitate bookstore efforts ranging from purchase orders to returning books to publishers and vendors.

Speed and ease of use are key benefits of the new solution for bookstore operations and improved customer service. “The Zebra bar code scanners are nimble and they help us keep the lines at the POS stations moving at peak times,” said Pihl.

Future-proofing was a key consideration when the OSU Bookstore team deployed the new solution. “Many retailers that plan to deliver coupons and other offers to cell phones and PDAs are deploying imagers to read bar codes from those devices,” Pihl stated. “Our Zebra scanners are ready, and a future upgrade of the POS software will support this function when we need it.”

The OSU Bookstore team is also looking ahead to other potential uses of the system. “RFID is a longer-term possibility, and the Zebra scanner is RFID-upgradeable. Since the Zebra scanner has the capability to capture and transfer images, we may consider imaging checks or identification cards for our loss prevention purposes,” Pihl concluded.

For the Oregon State Bookstore, the benefits of the Zebra and Nebraska Book Company solution include:

- Faster, easier barcode scanning at the POS
- More efficient customer service at the POS during peak volume
- Streamlining barcode scanning for textbook shelving
- Delivering the flexibility of high-performance hand-held and hands-free POS scanning capabilities
- Future-proofing for virtual commerce, mobile coupons, document imaging and RFID.

ABOUT ZEBRA

Zebra Technologies Corporation is a global leader respected for innovation and reliability. Zebra offers an extensive range of asset-tracking technologies incorporating mobile computing, data capture, barcode, wireless LAN, RFID, location systems and Zatar™, the cloud-based Internet of Things (IoT) platform. These technologies make businesses as smart and connected as the world we live in. Zebra's tracking and visibility solutions transform the physical to digital, creating the data streams businesses need in order to simplify operations, know more about their business, and empower their mobile workforce.

Zebra's products and solutions are used around the world by industries including healthcare, retail, transportation and logistics, manufacturing and sports—for a variety of applications from improving patient safety; to eliminating checkout lines with mobile devices; to streamlining warehouse operations and adding a new dimension to professional sports and entertainment with real-time information. For more information, please visit www.zebra.com.

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