

AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO RETAIL DATA COLLECTION AND TRANSACTION TECHNOLOGIES



Improving operational efficiencies. Lowering the cost of ownership. Ensuring a swift return on investment. Protecting your investment from obsolescence. These are just a few of the challenges you face when trying to make sound technology decisions.

The goal of this guide is to provide you with an understanding of today's retail data collection and transaction technologies, and arm you with a checklist of key industry trends to discuss with your supplier. The guide covers four critical store areas: point-of-sale, in-store data collection, the back room, and delivery.

Point-of-Sale

At the POS, the transaction and bar code reading technologies you choose are all about flexibility. As banks and credit agencies implement new transaction methods and the various standards organizations introduce new bar codes, the technologies you buy now have to be able to adapt to the future. Here's a look at the key questions you should be asking when investigating transaction terminals and bar code readers.

Does the transaction terminal use the latest in processing technology?

Innovative terminals can process credit and debit payments, access smart cards, capture signatures, present electronic forms, and display advertising and other information to your customers.

Does the terminal have the power to meet your future needs?

Installing additional applications onto an already power-starved terminal will result in reduced efficiency, slower checkouts, and unhappy customers. Look for terminals with the following minimum processing standards and you'll be assured of peak performance for many years to come: USB, 32-bit processor, 4MB Flash, 16MB of RAM, and Ethernet 10/100 BaseT.

Does your terminal have the flexibility to address emerging trends?

Since new terminals are a considerable investment, it is critical that they not only meet today's needs, but that scalability options are built in to adapt to emerging payment trends, such as smart cards and biometrics.

A trend to look for in the near future is the incorporation of an imaging scan engine into transaction terminals. Imaging can allow the multi-function transaction terminal to perform price checking, interact with customer, ID/age verification or other kiosk duties in a single device that becomes familiar to your customer.

Does your store's transaction terminals provide a customer-friendly experience?

Today's top terminals combine many transaction functions into a single customer-friendly device. Added features such as color displays and touch

screens make for an enhanced shopping experience. In addition, advanced terminals are now available with Ethernet capabilities that allow for on-screen advertising and interactive elements to engage customers in non-payment activities, such as opening an account.



Will you see a return on investment with your terminal selection?

Productivity is the number one concern among retailers – you want to move customers through your store within a certain timeframe while enhancing their shopping experience. With a single, multi-use, intuitive terminal that goes beyond basic payment processing— advertising, surveys, credit applications, etc.— your customers' satisfaction will be proof enough that you made a good financial investment.

What kind of hand held reading technology are you using?

When evaluating hand held readers, look for manufacturers that utilize imaging technology in their products. Data collection solutions featuring imaging technology offer advanced reading performance, even on damaged or poorly printed bar codes. Imaging technology products also protect your investment by reading emerging codes today such as EAN/UCC composite, RSS-14, and are fully compliant with 2005 Sunrise.

How durable is your bar code reader?

If downtime and repairs are a concern, products featuring imaging technology deliver unmatched durability. Imaging features 100% solid-state technology with no internal moving parts. Unlike laser scanners that use fragile moving parts, imaging is designed to better withstand the real-world conditions at the POS.

In-Store Data Collection

Mobile computers enable your workforce to complete many applications, such as real-time inventory and shelf replenishment in the store, significantly benefiting your operations. But with mobile computers available in many styles, shapes and capabilities, knowing what to look for will make the buying process easier and quicker.

Does your mobile computer give you the flexibility to adapt as your application changes?

A product that embraces industry standard development tools, instead of a proprietary system, allows for greater programming flexibility and fewer headaches for the IT department. Also, look for product solutions powered by imaging technology. Imaging allows you to take digital pictures for advanced storage and retrieval of information.



Will the information be secure as it is transmitted wirelessly?

Data security is a major concern whenever wireless data is transmitted. Look for a mobile computer with an open technology platform that uses the latest security standards while providing the flexibility to integrate new industry standards as they develop.

Will the mobile computer make your staff more productive?

Your mobile computer choices should include models that allow you to configure them to suit operators' needs. This includes models suited for right and left-handed operation and multiple keypad configurations.

Size and battery life are also key considerations – look for a device that is equipped with the latest battery technology to ensure that the mobile computer will perform for an entire shift.



Back Room

The receiving area may not be as glamorous as the store itself, but everyone knows that a smoothly functioning receiving area is critical to a successful store. Technology obviously plays a big role in an efficient backroom, and new developments in mobile computers and bar code imagers are making the process even better.



Is a laser scanner or imager right for your application?

Recent technologies developments in imaging ensure superior bar code reading even on poorly printed or damaged codes. Imaging technology provide these benefits while delivering the industry's highest level of reliability. Imaging also gives you value-added features not available from competing technologies, such as capturing signatures, taking pictures, and their ability to read emerging and specialty bar codes, including RSS-14, Matrix, postal and OCR symbologies and are fully compliant with 2005 Sunrise.

Will your bar code reader hold up in a rugged environment?

The fast-paced, heavy-duty environment of a back room, distribution center or warehouse requires hand held bar code imagers and mobile computers that are rugged. Hand holds or mobile computers that use imaging technology deliver durability since they use no internal moving parts. Look for manufacturers who demand the highest standards in drop rates and temperature variations. Warranties should be for a minimum of two years, even when used in the harshest environments.

What will today's mobile computer enable you to do on the receiving dock?

Besides being the toughest, most reliable products on the market, mobile computers that utilize imaging technology can capture an image of a damaged crate or a signature. This is useful in documenting proof or damage of shipment, and in combating shrinkage at the receiving dock.

Will your new system help your productivity?

Mobile computers and bar code readers that utilize imaging technology allow you to work faster, safer, and more efficiently than ever before. Best of all, imaging technology allows you to do all of the basic tasks well while providing value-added capabilities not found in older technologies. They also provide the flexibility to adapt to changing applications.

Delivery

Arming your employees with the latest in mobile computer technology and using wireless networks can close an open loop in your supply chain. A connected delivery fleet can provide you with real-time access to data and give you the ability to plan and anticipate changes, enhancing overall efficiency.



What is the advantage of a mobile computer with imaging technology?

Today's image-base mobile computers allow for quick, omni-directional input of all current bar code symbologies to keep your business running smoothly. The advantage of imaging is a host of functions, including the ability to read 2D and specialty codes, capturing signatures, taking photos, and more.

How can I be sure that my mobile computer will work with future applications?

As your application changes, your mobile computers should be able to grow with you. Utilizing mobile computers that incorporate imaging and an open architecture approach will provide you with a level of flexibility a proprietary system cannot deliver.

Will your device survive in rugged environments?

Mobile computers with imaging technology are more durable than standard lasers because they are equipped with 100% solid-state engines with no internal moving parts to replace or repair. In addition, the device should meet stringent drop and harsh weather tests that mirror real-world conditions.



The Hand Held Products Advantage

As you have seen throughout this guide, the world of retail data collection and transaction technologies is continually evolving. That's why partnering with a single provider that leads in the innovation, implementation, and personal support of these solutions for retailers can minimize risk, create operational efficiencies, and be cost-effective.

Hand Held Products is a leading innovator and manufacturer of transaction terminals, hand held imagers, and mobile computers for the entire retail environment – from the cash wrap to the trucks that move your goods. Our reputation for delivering breakthrough technology, single-source solutions, and world-class customer service spans more than thirty years.

Hand Held Products' transaction terminal product line includes multi-use, customer-friendly devices that provide flexible processing solutions to meet today's and tomorrow's needs. Our lineup of hand held imagers utilize cutting-edge imaging technology that provides greater performance and durability than laser scanners. And our Dolphin® line of mobile computers are proven industry performers that come complete with innovative processing technology, run on an open architecture system, and are built to last.

Hand Held Products' vast product line is led by our exclusive Adaptus™ Imaging Technology. Offering superior performance and versatility, Adaptus Imaging Technology represents the new standard for customers who demand extraordinary value from their technology investments.

For more information or to schedule an appointment to discuss your data collection needs, please contact Hand Held Products at 1-800-585-4263. Or visit us online at www.handheld.com

For more information on Adaptus Imaging Technology, log onto www.handheld.com

