

Ten Reasons to Automate Your Retail Store

The old fashioned cash registers you used to see at local merchant stores are quickly becoming a thing of the past. Instead, more and more retailers are making the switch to a pc based solution utilizing the ever powerful point-of-sale software technology.

Why the sudden change? The old cliché of "if it isn't broke don't fix it" doesn't work here. PC based POS (point of sale) systems are giving merchants the ability to generate better revenues, increase productivity among staff and ultimately free up some time that would have previously been spent on work tasks. So although the way they used to do it was fine; this way is better.

POS solutions are affordable. In today's world, merchants do have options and operating your business with a point-of-sale system such as [POSitive Retail Manager or Microsoft's RMS](#) can give you added flexibility, substantially streamlined processes and efficient record keeping benefits, just to name a few. For around \$1,300 you can purchase a one station system, making the switch affordable and justifiable.

POS solutions are easy to use. Both Microsoft Retail Management System and POSitive Retail Manager can be used by store cashiers and store managers and offer intuitive tools to make learning easier. Each system houses refined reporting and search capabilities, inventory management functions and fast organization of sales order information. There is no doubt that operating your business with a POS system will provide a platform for success and an environment where your day to day operations run more efficiently and increase productivity.

Hardware requirements are minimal. POSitive PRM is a sophisticated and intuitive point-of-sale system built around Microsoft's SQL, a robust and scalable database. Microsoft's RMS requires a Windows-based computing device that accommodates Windows 98 or a later version. Both programs work effectively with common point-of sale peripherals such as printers, bar code readers, magnetic strip readers and cash drawers.

Eliminate double-entry bookkeeping. By integrating credit-card transaction processing into your business operations with PRM and RMS you'll help to reduce data re-entry at the point of sale and can facilitate easier reporting and reconciliation of transactions at the end of the month. By integrating one of these systems with your accounting software, you eliminate the need for paper and cut down on errors while streamlining and improving your bookkeeping and tax record-keeping processes.

Eliminate manual inventory tracking. Through system automation, you can eliminate the otherwise mundane task of keeping track of your inventory. Rosenblum says "this is what a computer is supposed to do for you." As a result of using the inventory tracking tools built into these two systems, you will save time and be able to monitor trends and buying patterns better, which can help you make better ordering, buying and pricing decisions. The bottom line will show an increase in sales and you will have a stronger hold on your inventory and how fast it takes to "turn" a product.

Reduce operating and labor costs. Combining an ability to closely monitor your inventory, eliminate the need to re-enter data and streamline day to day operations will give you and your sales staff more time to focus on selling. A point-of-sale system will equip you with the tools to better determine when you need to add staff or cut back to accommodate sales demand. Another bonus is you'll eliminate the need

for separate point-of-sale terminals for credit cards and the associated phone lines; freeing up valuable counter space.

Serve customers and market products better. Unlike traditional cash registers, these systems allow you to keep track of your customers' buying habits. You can determine which products are selling and to whom, which provides greater insight into what you should be carrying in your inventory. Being customer focused will help you get a leg up on the competition and assist you in marketing campaigns and sales promotions.

You can expand your number of stores and e-commerce options. Both Microsoft RMS and POSitive PRM are scalable; allowing you to keep the same software and systems as you grow into multiple stores and retail channels. As your business and customer base grow, you can store and manage unlimited amounts of data with the Microsoft SQL Server.

Stay in business longer. If you are thinking about transferring your business to the next generation or selling it outright, a word of caution: don't even think about it unless you have embraced technology. As time goes on, retailers who rely on paper-based systems will stick out like a sore thumb in a supply chain where most transactions will be done online.

Now you can leave the store earlier and go home to your life. After all, by bringing a point-of-sale system on board you now have more free time to enjoy the other things in life that bring you happiness. Go home. You deserve it.