



Weighing up the cost of technology against its benefits

It's a hard call. In the present economy many retailers are reluctant or cannot afford to pay for higher end technology. Yet, when looking at the field of scales, labels and in-store packaging the benefits are there: greater productivity, less shrinkage and wastage, and more sales.

Variable length labels are an option becoming available on new scales. The technology costs more but there are powerful advantages.

For one thing one does not need to stock a variety of label sizes saving on label inventory and the need to switch label sizes. Then you can get a lot more info onto the labels.

In today's world, where more and more consumers are health conscious, looking to save as well as being more experiential, information such as recipes, nutritional facts, cooking instructions and lists of allergens and other messages on-pack like 'Special of Today' increases sales. Giving consumers this information gives them the confidence to buy and the increased sales more than offset the additional cost.

At the same time the Department of Health regulation 146 relating to the labelling and advertising of processed foodstuffs, eg. boerewors as opposed to raw meat, requires

much of the above information on labels. In practice, enforcement of the regulation has been weak, but it can be expected in future.

Automatic tray wrappers have been around for a while, but are gaining in popularity despite the capital cost. They perform a number of functions in one process: wrap, weigh, price, print and apply the label. This is normally the work of anything from 3 – 6 staff members doing the job manually.

The result is a neater, better wrapped pack with reduced film usage. Along the way auto-wrappers also reduce power consumption while getting the product to shelf faster. Another benefit claimed is that they can extend product shelf life as they use less heat to seal the packs. Wrapping manually requires more heat for sealing packs and it can penetrate the tray.

Auto-wrappers have a footprint of little more than a square metre and a pack rate of up to 36 packs a minutes. Stores that install auto-wrappers find they can move staff previously engaged in the packing process to other functions within the store.

While the butchery has been the site of most auto-wrapper installations, some stores in the last six months have also installed them in their fresh produce departments to

pack partially prepared items such as pieces of watermelon, soup packs and the like.

The best way to weigh up the cost benefit of an auto wrapper is to actually experience it through a loan machine from one of the suppliers.

Scales at the checkouts have more potential benefits than just replacing serviced weighing and dedicated pricing points in the fresh produce department. It makes sense for stores with extensive loose fresh produce displays like Food Lovers markets to weigh and price at the checkout.

For one thing, they would need quite number of serviced pricing points along the displays and customers could face multiple waits for service. But even stores with small fresh produce departments have installed scales at the checkouts on the basis that no customer should ever have to wait for their selection to be priced because the service person has gone off somewhere. Queuing at a service point, especially in stores in convenience locations, is anyway an irritation and makes the store less convenient.

There is also a potential saving in manpower. While cashiers still have to put the selected products on the scale and key in product codes, they don't have to close the bag

SATO CL4NX Retail Printer



SATO TH2 Portable Printer



SATO Judo Food Hand Labeller



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A durable, compact mid-range printer with industry-leading performance and specifications, this simple but smart model features:

- Durable, diecast aluminium design
- Superior print accuracy
- Variety of media types, wound-in or out, ribbon & label
- Space saving design – bi-fold side cover
- Easy set-up & maintenance
- Full colour interactive LCD display
- Multiple interfaces include LAN, USB & Bluetooth

SATO TH2 Portable Printer

A portable, standalone printer that is small in size but big on functionality, the TH2 is ideal for applications such as price marking, shelf labelling, food safety and preparation labelling. Features include:

- Small & compact
- Portable, battery operated
- One-touch, high resolution printing
- Date & time stamp
- Wide, adjustable LCD display
- Supports 2D bar code printing
- Multiple interfaces – USB / LAN

SATO Judo Food Hand Labeller

This economical, user-friendly hand labeller is ideal for food and food safety labelling, and features:

- 13 Text Food Safety Rotary Cliché (top)
- Date/Time/Price indication (bottom)
- Greater usage flexibility
- Easy to use & maintain
- Higher cost-effectiveness

For more about SATO's supermarket and retail products, contact us on one of the numbers below or send an email to autoid@kemtek.co.za.



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and apply a label which one has to do with serviced scaling points and which takes time.

There is a potential sales inhibitor with scaling at the checkouts. Shoppers don't know how much their selection is going to cost them at the tills.

One alternative to serviced pricing points in the fresh produce displays are self-service scales with large touch screens and graphic selection of the produce to be weighed. While this works well in some stores, other operators are reluctant to trust their customers to label their purchase accurately.

Weight verification

There are also potential security loss prevention benefits to be had with scales at the checkout. With compatible POS software they can be programmed to verify the weight of prepacks. If the barcode says the pack weighs 300g and the checkout scale reads 450g, the POS can be programmed to refuse the sale.

This is a standard feature in some meat and chicken specialist outlets like Roots and OBC Chicken. One estimate puts the return on investment of a checkout scale pack weight verification set-up at just six months.

Another related security feature is where surveillance cameras record what's going through the tills and the barcode is also read showing product, price and weight, and this is overlaid on the video. So a butchery prepack labelled 'Bones' that the video shows contains rump steak can easily be captured.

This recording system has also been widely applied over the past ten or so years at service counters in the likes of PnP and Spar

outlets – a testimony to its shrinkage control effectiveness.

Conclusion

While there is a cost to applying technology in the scales, labels and in-store packaging sphere, the benefits may well far outweigh the cost. Lower total cost per pack, better shrinkage control and more sales all add up on the bottom line.





TERAOKA

VARIABLE LENGTH LABELING

All 3 labels were printed on ONE scale using ONE roll of labels



SM120 SCALE

+



TERAOKA LABELS

=

BOEREWORS

SELL DATE: 12 JUL'16 UNIT: 0.010 PRICE: 69.99 WEIGHT: 1.250

87.49

TERAOKA CITY DEEP INDUSTRIAL PARK JOHANNESBURG SOUTH AFRICA

FARMSTYLE BOEREWORS

Ingredients: Beef & beef fat and/or pork & pork fat (90% min meat (30% max fat), Water, Vinegar, Salt, Wheat D-ticum anatum (gluten), Spices, MSG (flavour enhancer), Preservative (sodium metabisulphite [sulphur dioxide]), Flavourings, Flavour enhancer. May contain undeclared ingredients. Not suitable for people with Wheat, Gluten, Soya or Cow's Milk allergy.

KEEP REFRIGERATED

SELL DATE: 12 JUL'16 UNIT: 0.010 PRICE: 69.99 WEIGHT: 1.250

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Opening Special



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PRODUCT OF RSA

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TERAOKA CITY DEEP INDUSTRIAL PARK JOHANNESBURG SOUTH AFRICA

ADVANTAGES OF VARIABLE LENGTH LABELS

- The Less Information, The Smaller The Label.
- No Wasted Space on Label
- Better Presentation on Packs
- More Labels per Roll
- No Waste (Backing Paper)

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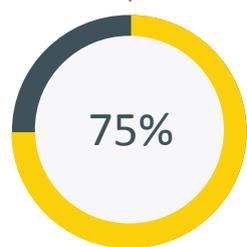
responsible packaging

Instagram icon [hulamincontainers](#)

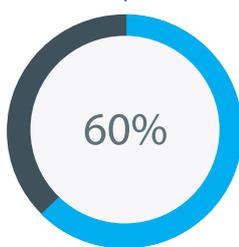
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