

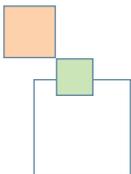
Spirit stores up even greater efficiency for Selfridges

Although automated data capture devices are used in many different areas of work, their presence is most obvious in retail outlets, where they have revolutionised the efficiency of Point of Sale operations. Selfridges, one of the UK's most prestigious retail chains, has been using sophisticated imagers at its outlets for several years. It recently upgraded the devices at its London and Manchester stores with the help of Spirit Data Capture, the independent mobile computing specialist.



Selfridges & Co is one of the UK's leading chains of department stores. It opened its first flagship store in London's Oxford Street in 1909 and even today, this is the UK's second largest shop. In its first year, the store exhibited the plane in which Louis Bleriot made the first cross channel flight. In 1925, the first public television broadcast was made from the shop by John Logie Baird. Selfridges now also has large stores in Birmingham, Manchester and Trafford.

Over 15 million customers shop at the Oxford Street branch alone each year. This means that the company needs a very accurate, rapid and reliable method of scanning barcodes on the items taken to the tills by shoppers. For the past eight years, the company has been using imaging devices manufactured by Honeywell Imaging and Mobility (formerly Hand Held Products). ▶



Case Study

Selfridges' System Support team looks after the company's Point of Sale operations, its network and the general IT infrastructure. David Atkinson from the System Support team takes up the story: "The imagers had served us well, but needed upgrading. This was an ideal time to review our system, as we were also changing our electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) system."

Selfridges approached Spirit Data Capture Limited for help with the upgrading. Spirit has worked closely with Selfridges for a number of years. David continues: "We were looking for the most cost-effective hand held scanner available – but it would also need to be very reliable and also very rugged, as it would have to cope with being used at one of the busiest stores in Europe.

"The look and feel of the device was also very important to us, as this influences its usability and also affects the customer's perception of our corporate image. It needed to provide high performance levels and meet our criteria for total cost of ownership." Selfridges subsequently tested a variety of devices from a range of manufacturers.

David Atkinson comments: "We finally selected the 3800g from Honeywell Imaging and Mobility. This proved to be the best product as it met all of our criteria. Another bonus was that it was supplied by Spirit Data Capture, who have supported us for a long time."

The 3800g is a high performance scanner that can be used in a wide variety of industries and applications. It has some impressive credentials – it is the latest model from the 3800 series of linear imagers. The original 3800 has the lowest defect return rate of any similar type of device worldwide, thereby minimising the total cost of ownership.

The 3800g is feature-rich and offers an extremely high reading performance. It is very fast, and can be used at a

comfortable distance from barcodes, making life easier for the operator. It is sleek, stylish, and even smaller and lighter than the 3800. It also has improved ergonomics and is stronger and tougher than ever, with lateral resistance bumpers for added protection. It incorporates WEPOS (Windows embedded point of service) capabilities for retail connectivity.

The new imagers have been connected to Selfridges' new EPOS system and are being used at the Point of Sale in the London and Manchester stores. All of the stores' existing scanners will be replaced by the 3800g imagers over the next few months.

"Spirit provided the complete devices and ensured that they met our connectivity and configuration requirements," says David Atkinson. "This made the testing and approval process very easy for us. We are now experiencing less downtime with the new models, and as a result our maintenance and support costs have been dramatically reduced."

He adds: "We are extremely pleased with the performance and reliability of the new devices, and our personnel are very happy with them. The units are very rugged and give a high performance, even when scanning poor quality codes. They are easy to use and can scan all the different barcodes we encounter. This is important, as

we use suppliers from all over the world – and they have different ways of printing codes, which are also of varying quality."

David concludes: "Spirit have been superb in the level of support they have provided. They ensure that we get what we need when we need it. Their deliveries are on time and they are a very reliable supplier. They are also continuing to maintain our old scanners until they are replaced. We will definitely continue to use their services in the future."

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David Atkinson
System Support



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