

White paper

Top 10 Ways to Spice up DSD Efficiency and Sell More

Are your Profits Perishable? Are your out-of-stocks avoidable? Find out how you can improve.

Introduction

In today's Direct Store Delivery, every minute matters. Making the most out of your business means optimizing every level of operations, which isn't always easy. That's why Intermecc – the industry leader in DSD for the last 30 years – would like to share some important advice. Having equipped 200,000 routes with our solutions, we've picked up a few words of wisdom along the way.

1. Speed up Backroom Processing

Can your DSD personnel deliver faster than your computer communicates? The Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) predicts that DSD receiving time could be reduced by as much as 60% with automated check-in processes that eliminate labor-intensive, item-by-item verification. It takes 30 seconds to transmit an invoice electronically, compared with five to 20 minutes for manual entry and 60 minutes for item-by-item complicated deliveries.

2. Communicate in Real Time

Real-time communications can allow your team to retrieve accurate pricing before deliveries, prevent delays in the backroom and avoid retailer penalties. That means you can spend more time at the shelves and avoid the hassles of reconciling problems. GMA identifies that preventing out-of-stocks could add \$6 billion in DSD sales each year. Shouldn't your personnel spend as much time merchandising as possible?

3. Lower Your Print Costs; Increase Invoice Accuracy

Last minute changes are inevitable in an industry that reacts to demand in real time. Having a mobile printer with the delivery person will allow you to generate invoices on the spot, without wasting time and energy climbing in and out of the vehicle. Portability and flexibility are the key: wouldn't it be nice to have a single printer that handles multiple media sizes, which has saved some companies 25% to 50% on printer supplies and document imaging costs?

4. Paper or Plastic? Accept Both

Making customers pay with cash reduces their purchases to the amount of cash they have in the store. With a credit card reader, your personnel will give customers the opportunity to buy more by relying on the credit from their bank, not cash in the drawer. That small difference could result in an uplift of 10% to 15%, based on past results. And in terms of convenience, magnetic stripe readers that connect directly to your mobile computers are the way to go.

5. Watch the Routes

With gas prices on the rise and personnel turn-over a daily dilemma, are your routes optimized as much as possible? Are you wasting time and gas? Do you know where your workers are and what they're doing? GPS can help you verify that your personnel made the deliveries, optimize routes to reduce the cost of gas and provide quick route changes to accommodate emergency deliveries.

6. Locate your Assets

Where are your point-of-purchase displays, coolers and vending machines? Are they in working order? Where do your trays, crates and pallets go missing? GPS, 2D bar coding and RFID can provide asset visibility to help you find out the answers. The American Baking Association estimates that lost containers account for \$1 billion in expenses each year. Ignorance is not always bliss.

7. Plan, Organize, Cash In

Your business success depends on how well you represent your products on the shelves and in the freezers. According to the GMA, CPG company interviews of fast moving consumer goods reveal efficient DSD operations spend almost 14 minutes more (almost twice as much time) on merchandising than inefficient DSD operations. Improve merchandising and competitive positioning by collecting data such as competitive pricing and quantities sold so you can build a better in-store plan. Don't leave it to chance.

8. A Picture is worth 1,000 Words

Ever wonder what the competition is up to? Wonder how that promotional display looks? An imager that captures both barcodes and high-resolution images is a great way to see what's really happening in the store. See what your crew sees, and you'll be able to keep a closer eye on the shelf.

9. Consider the Greater Needs

Think today's DSD only calls for a mobile computer? Think again. Understanding what peripherals are necessary to piece together your DSD puzzle can improve personnel performance day-in, day-out. Think Bluetooth speech and voice for a hands-free, faster solution.

10. Get Tough on Hardware

Looking at industry surveys, buying anything less than rugged devices for your delivery-intensive tasks might be the equivalent of flushing profits down the drain. For example, purchasing consumer-grade PDAs may lead to a five-year Total Cost of Ownership that is up to five times more expensive than rugged mobile computers. When PDAs fail, they fail. Routes demand rugged tools. Now isn't the time to be timid.

The Bottom Line

Whether you are in your fourth generation of mobile computing or considering implementing for the first time, your DSD operations can benefit from some of the practical advice listed above. If you're still relying on written records or just automating your paper, it's time to adopt an automated, real-time data capture solution with built-in GPS. If you don't have rugged mobile computers that can scan and image with a portable receipt, full-page printer, the smart money says you should upgrade – unless you want your profits to perish.

Intermec provides comprehensive solutions for Direct Store Delivery operations. With mobile computers, portable printers and everything else you need to improve every level of your operations, we can help you spice up efficiency and sell more.

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