



GIANT Food Stores Improves Customer Service with Polycom® SpectraLink® Wireless Telephones

Retail

Daily Use

- Deployed wireless telephones in 150 stores

Solution

- Polycom® SpectraLink® 8000 Wireless Telephones

Results and Benefits

- Eliminates the need for overhead paging
- Leverages the stores' existing Wi-Fi network
- Utilizes text messaging for a price checks or cash runs without ever leaving the register
- Managers are more available to help shoppers on the floor, keep tabs on restocking needs, control deliveries and react to any spills in their area.

Picture the following scenario: Grocery shoppers are walking up and down supermarket aisles, listening to music on the overhead speakers while casually picking out their items. Then comes a noisy barrage of store employees, "Price check on aisle 12," "Cleanup on aisle 4," and "Manager needed at checkout 8." These overhead disturbances interrupt the relaxed shopping atmosphere and disrupt the shopper's experience, as well as slowdown the checkout process. Unfortunately, this scenario is commonplace in most supermarkets. Supermarket employees abuse the overhead paging system, which results in a disruptive shopping environment.

However, GIANT Food Stores has recently taken steps to minimize these disturbances by installing Polycom® SpectraLink® 8000 Wireless Telephones in its 150 stores in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. The SpectraLink system enables GIANT associates to communicate over portable, fully functioning wireless telephones anywhere in the store which eliminates the need for noisy and disrupting overhead paging.

Now a department manager can handle price checks without bothering GIANT shoppers. A cashier can deal directly with the front-end manager on a SpectraLink Wireless Telephone when cash is needed. A phone call from a produce supplier can reach the floor manager no matter where that person is in the store. Response time to customer needs is decreased and the level of customer attention is dramatically increased.

"Now with the touch of a button, our cashiers can contact the department head or floor manager directly from their SpectraLink Wireless Telephones," says Denny Hopkins, vice president of advertising and sales development for GIANT Food Stores.

It doesn't matter if we need to reach a staff member in the stockroom, in the front office, or on the sales floor. We've substantially cut the amount of time shoppers wait in line and minimized disruptions during their shopping experience."

Functional and Practical

GIANT recently overhauled its stores' telephone systems and was looking for a better way for its associates to communicate and assist customers. SpectraLink Wireless Telephones were the obvious choice. The SpectraLink

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system operates at GIANT over Symbol Technologies' Spectrum24 802.11 wireless LAN infrastructure and incorporates Polycom's Open Application Interface (OAI) capabilities to support text messaging to the SpectraLink Wireless Telephones.

With the SpectraLink Wireless Telephones and text messaging capabilities, cashiers can now select a function directly from their handset to send a non-disruptive text message to a particular department-head's Wireless Telephone for a price check or a front-end clerk for a cash run without ever leaving the register.

Prior to the installation of the SpectraLink system at GIANT, the cashier called out price checks on the overhead paging system. Then the cashier and the customer waited at the register while the appropriate department-head responded to the page, checked the item, and returned with a price. If the department-head in question was away from the section for any reason, the delay was often lengthy thus creating a longer wait for other customers in line.

Streamlined Store Operations

In addition to improved customer service and decreased customer delays, GIANT's management team has noticed improved operational efficiency as a result of the Wireless Telephones.

By being able to field calls from their sections, department heads can attend to their work without having to run to answer a desk phone every few minutes. Managers are more available to help shoppers on the floor, keep tabs on restocking needs, and react to any spills in their area.

An added bonus is the improved ability of floor management to control deliveries and just-in-time inventory issues. Previously, if a manager was called off the floor to answer a phone call, there was a risk of missing an important delivery and delaying the arrival of much needed stock another day. Now, department heads are more likely to be on the floor, and if away from their station, are easily reached and available to take charge of a delivery.

“Between running for the phone, going to the back to check on stock, or trying to track down another staff member, department heads were on the shopping floor between 35 to 45 percent of the time,” said Hopkins. “With the SpectraLink Wireless Telephones, they're spending more than 75 percent of their time out on the floor working and helping customers. This is a major improvement for everyone.”

Seamless Integration, Simple Deployment

The SpectraLink system has been implemented in each GIANT Food Store. The installation in each store consists of ten SpectraLink Wireless Telephones per store, mainly used by store management and department heads, with four to seven Symbol Spectrum24 wireless LAN access points installed in the ceilings throughout the store. Telephone calls are sent from the store's PBX through a SpectraLink Telephony Gateway to the store's Ethernet LAN and transmitted via radio waves from the wireless LAN access points to the individual wireless telephones. The installation process for all 150 stores was completed in just under three months.

SpectraLink Wireless Telephones have greatly improved customer service and operational efficiencies at GIANT Food Stores. Customers receive more attention on the shopping floor and spend less time waiting in the checkout line for price checks and cashiers. Store management has also seen a dramatic increase in the time they are able to spend on the selling floor, ensuring the store is running smoothly. Ultimately, through the use of SpectraLink Wireless Telephones, GIANT has created a more productive working environment for its employees and the ideal atmosphere for grocery shoppers in general.

Learn More

Visit polycom.com to find out more about Polycom SpectraLink Wireless Telephones and other Polycom solutions and services.

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