



BLUEBIRD

Mobile Access to Store System Drives Operational Efficiency and Productivity for Japanese Retailer Trial

Japanese-based discount retailer Trial deploys over 2,000 BP30 rugged handheld devices from Bluebird to provide access to the store system from anywhere in the store, significantly improving operational efficiency and productivity.

BACKGROUND

Trial Company is a retail chain with over 180 discount supercenters across Japan and Korea, offering everyday merchandise at low cost, including perishable and processed foods, daily goods, apparel, home electronics, and more. The company focuses on innovation and utilizes technology to provide better products at lower prices. Trial is headquartered in Fukuoka, Japan, and had a \$3.2 billion turnover in 2013.

CHALLENGES

Trial is a rapidly growing company, and with an increasing number of stores to manage, it is important that employees have access to tools to communicate and collaborate efficiently. One of the company's top priorities is to make PACER, the internally developed store system, available to all employees. In order to make that happen, store employees were provided smartphones, but the rollout was problematic.

"We quickly learned that consumer-grade smartphones are poorly equipped for the retail environment and extensive usage," says Shinji Nishikawa, CIO of Trial. "The smartphones would easily break if dropped and the devices would constantly lose the connection to PACER due to spotty Wi-Fi coverage in the relatively large stores."

SOLUTION

After evaluating the market, Trial decided to go with the BP30 from Bluebird, a rugged Android-based handheld device. To date, over 2,000 BP30 handheld devices have been deployed in more than 140 mega- and supercenters across Japan.

The BP30 combines sleek, lightweight design with durability and high performance. It features a 1.8 meter drop specification and is protected against water and dust. The imager provides fast scanning of barcodes, including two-dimensional bar codes and QR codes and the device is also equipped with a front and back camera. The large 5 inch display improves readability and the battery easily lasts the entire work shift — even when the camera and scanner are heavily used.

The Linkon™ connectivity manager ensures that the BP30 has stable connectivity to the Wi-Fi network throughout the store, maximizing availability of the store system so that employees can work without interruptions. Users in the field also have the option of connecting via the cellular network.

The BP30 provides access to the PACER store system from anywhere in the store. Key applications include labor scheduling, inventory management, replenishment, markdowns, out-of-stock reporting, price and product searches, internal emails, and ordering.



"PACER in combination with the BP30 puts information at the fingertips of our employees and makes it possible for us to run a large store operation with fewer employees."

Shinji Nishikawa, CIO of Trial

INDUSTRY

- Retail

LOCATION

- 140 discount mega- and supercenters in Japan

OBJECTIVES

- Connect all employees to the store system
- Improve collaboration and communication among employees at all levels of the company
- Resolve problem with spotty Wi-Fi coverage

SOLUTION

- BP30 handheld device from Bluebird, running Android
- The Bluebird Linkon connectivity manager ensures stable Wi-Fi connectivity for the handheld device
- Mobile apps developed by Trial provide real-time connection to PACER

“Bluebird dedicated a lot of resources to make sure all the components worked perfectly, including resolving the connectivity problems we previously had with the Wi-Fi networks in the stores.”

Other Android apps such as web browsers and games have been locked down and are not available to the users. In the next phase, Trial is looking at using the BP30 for voice communication.

At the beginning of the work shift, store employees log in to PACER by scanning their employee IDs and a detailed schedule with all assigned tasks is presented on the screen. Completion of tasks is reported to the backend store system in real-time.

Inventory and price inquiries can quickly be done on the BP30 instead of running to the back room to check a price or to see if an item is in stock. Trial uses automated ordering for most of its products, but orders can also be placed directly on the BP30.

One of the apps allows store employees to use the BP30 to report out-of-stock items by scanning the shelf label and taking a picture of the empty shelf. The image and instructions are sent to PACER and the task to replenish is assigned to a store employee who receives a message on his or her handheld device.

Another app allows store employees to print barcode labels on a mobile printer, which communicates with the BP30 via Bluetooth. Trial uses this function to mark down unsold perishable food items at the end of the day to boost sales and reduce shrink.

Management can track completion of tasks and access sales reports in real-time.

BENEFITS

“PACER in combination with the BP30 puts information at the fingertips of our employees and makes it possible for us to run a large store operation with fewer employees,” says Nishikawa.

The BP30 empowers employees to do their jobs more effectively, increasing productivity and operational efficiency. It reduces labor costs, which is an instrumental part of Trial’s low-cost strategy.

“Improved communication has reduced out-of-stocks by 40 percent, contributing to more sales and higher customer satisfaction,” continues Nishikawa.

The durable yet stylish, lightweight design of the BP30 has proven to be a perfect fit for Trial, and the employees have quickly adapted to the system.

The Android operating system provides an open development platform, which made integration with PACER easier and more cost-efficient.

“Bluebird has been an essential part of the success of this project,” adds Nishikawa. “They dedicated a lot of resources to make sure all the components worked perfectly, including resolving the connectivity problems.”



“Improved communication has reduced out-of-stocks by 40 percent, contributing to more sales and higher customer satisfaction.”



**The BM180 is a lighter but still rugged version of the BP30.*

CS-EN-2014

Copyright © 1995-2014 Bluebird Inc. All rights reserved. Bluebird Inc. is the designer and manufacturer of Pidion handheld mobiles. Pidion and the stylized Pidion Logo are registered trademarks and symbols of Bluebird Inc. Features and specifications are subject to change without prior notice.



Bluebird Inc. (Corporate Headquarters)
SEI Tower 13~14F | 467-14 | Dogok-dong | Gangnam-gu | Seoul | Korea (ROK)
Phone: +82.70.7730.8000 | Fax: +82.2.6499.2242 | www.mypidion.com

