

Self-Service Check-Outs at inco Danmark

*At inco Danmark amba
customers use Shopevolution™
from Datalogic to scan all items
by themselves*

The future for wholesalers and retailers shows supermarkets and hypermarkets where customers will handle major parts of the shopping process by themselves. By doing this they can avoid the long queues at check-outs. As the leading cash & carry store and wholesaler in Denmark, inco has decided to take the full step and is the first to invest in full self-service check-outs. This saves time for the customers and frees personnel to concentrate on more service and sales related activities.

Inco Danmark is a nationwide supplier to the food-sector in Denmark. Its customers are made up of professional food buyers that are divided into three major sectors: butchers, bakers and caterers that include restaurants, canteens, fast-food, etc. Daily more than 1200 customers are served, and they can shop in three different ways: the sales office by telephone for delivery, in internet to place orders for delivery and directly in the cash & carry store. The store is located in Copenhagen with a sales area of 14,000 m² and skilled staff available to customers.

The company carries more than 25,000 items in its assortment, which is the largest in the sector in Denmark. This makes inco more than capable to meet the various demands from the customers. Inco Danmark's goal is to be 'the number one business partner for sales to the professional food trade in Denmark'. To attain this goal inco Danmark is always looking out for new ways to improve its services to its customers, and now it is the first cash & carry store in Denmark to provide self-service check-outs, where customers scan all items while shopping and afterwards pay at a special checkout all by themselves.

This new service is called Fast Track and is based on the Shopevolution™ CRM solution from Datalogic. Fast Track is very simple to use and is available for all customers of the store, because to be able to shop at inco Danmark, one needs to be a member. The innovative I7250 Shopper Assistant terminal from Datalogic with colour display is placed in dispensers located in the entrances of the store for customers to take and scan the



bar codes of the items while shopping. The Shopper Assistant can be placed in a holder installed on the carts so that it is easier to manoeuvre the cart around the aisles while shopping in the store. When customers have finished shopping, two self-service check-outs are provided for Fast-Track customers. At this point the customers pay by themselves by using the self-payment system, selecting between cash or credit card. The terminal is then returned to the dispenser.

Due to the large quantity of items typically purchased by customers in cash & carry stores, the time previously spent at a check-out having items read usually took around 15 minutes, in addition to the time spent queuing. Now with Fast Track this has been almost eliminated.

The new service was launched in November 2005 and so far the response from customers has been extremely positive.

The queuing times at the check-out are much shorter, and customers can spend more time getting inspired while shopping around the aisles. Employees at inco Danmark are also freed from lifting heavy items from carts and can now concentrate their efforts on better customer service.

Now with 81 Shopper Assistants installed in the store, around 20% of sales turnover in inco Danmark's cash & carry store is made by Fast Track. The owner of a restaurant called Nybro Kro on the outskirts of Copenhagen, Ms. Solveig Lindvig Nielsen commenting on Fast Track states, "This is a genius system and I save tremendous amounts of time that I can now spend in my restaurant. I think it is of utmost importance and a serious competitive advantage for inco Danmark. All customers would obviously like to refrain from staying in queues."

According to Ole Bang Nielsen, Managing Director at inco Danmark, "Danish supermarkets and hypermarkets, including cash & carries are sceptical about taking on new technology due to the heavy investments involved".

Inco Denmark, on the other hand, has had very good experience with the new system and there is no doubt that this investment was necessary for inco Danmark to maintain its position of being the customer's preferred supplier for the food industry. The system is built on mutual respect and confidence between the customers and the vendor, and is a cooperation between both parties to reduce ineffective time and resources."

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