The Select Group

Point-of-Sale System Upgrades

Enabling Digital Evolution and Contactless Payments

Consumer experience, contactless payment, and point-of-sale (POS) technology and security advances have enabled gas station, service station, grocery store, and convenience store operators to enhance services provided to customers.

The pump or parking lot terminal is fast becoming more than just a payment device. An operator can engage with the customer on promotional offers, value-added services, loyalty program benefits, security, and infotainment offerings.

To take advantage of these opportunities, station or store operators have made significant investments in technology, software, and infrastructure. Video display terminals, upgraded payment devices, and higher speed connections, enabled by enhanced physical and electronic security, are vital components of these new POS systems.

Industry Evolution

Un-Smart Gas Stations

Travelling consumers used to pull up, fill up, and leave gas stations with little thought about "added value" from the station or convenience store. If customers went inside, it was almost always to simply pay for their fuel. The customer interaction from the cashiers or attendants was limited to taking payment and giving directions when asked. In the early years of fuel technology, the transaction stopped when payment was made. With technology advances in POS systems, and integration of payment options at the pumps, the customer experience improved marginally but also reduced the time spent in the store at all. What used to be an occasional thing became even rarer.

Convenience Store Effect

Convenience stores have been around in the United States since the late 1920s when Southland stores, which would eventually become 7-Eleven, was founded. The idea of attaching a mini market to fueling stations was a novel concept. Still, it did not gain widespread acceptance until the late 1950s to early 1960s, with growth eventually proving the concept fully in the early 1990s. Convenience stores were here to stay and now account for more than 80% of all fuel sales. The subsequent decades vastly improved the industry through technology, automation, and increasingly higher data transfer speeds. Our client was looking for a partner to gather requirements and perform validation for Service and Privileged User accounts to reduce risk and improve operational efficiencies.

Technology Advances

Building on the self-service concept many gas stations moved toward, many convenience store and fuel station operators installed POS technology, which allowed customers to pay for their gas without any interaction with another person. Improving technology inside the store, where margins are higher than at the pump, also enabled savvy operators or franchisors to improve profits and continue expansion.

Introducing POS at the pump also opened new methods of communicating with customers. Enabling this technology required new hardware, improved wiring and cabling systems, and new software aimed at taking advantage of the new systems. However, it was in the operators' best interest to maximize revenue opportunities to offset the cost of the POS installations.

New digital screens at gas pumps deliver advertising, weather, entertainment updates, and special offers to customers, getting them into the store where the real profits live.

Project Engagement

Our client looked for a partner to help accelerate this move toward digital video screens and enhanced POS functionality through an ambitious project across hundreds of locations. We spent time with the client to understand the scope, technology and services that would be required to deliver the desired outcome. They had decided to implement the mobile pay and go pump dispensers at their gas stations across the United States and engaged TSG to help with the effort to enable the new feature. The project entailed:

- POS device support and upgrades
- Microsoft operating systems and software
- HP and Dell hardware and software
- Remove installation and troubleshooting
- End customer/operator training

Managed Solution

Our teams provided the following services:

- Maintaining an average migration of ~100 locations per week
- Connectivity testing
- Troubleshooting at physical, transport, network, and application layers
- Project management and coordination
- Loyalty program software enablement

Our process begins with appointing an **engagement manager** to be the **single point of contact** for our client, ensuring service-level agreements (SLAs), deliverables, and milestones. The engagement manager also identifies and manages the project's scope, including all financial performances like invoicing and budget tracking, in addition to team performance issues.

TSG Managed Solution Results

The client's decision to partner with The Select Group delivered the project on time and allowed them to meet the project objectives, **delivering more than the 80 stores per week described in the original scope.** Our rapid fulfillment of an entire team and deliverables-based approach allowed us to stay engaged with the client. Our successful delivery opened another project to perform the same type of work at another end client.