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SELF-CHECKOUTS FOR THALIA

Achieve Team Success with App Enablement

The Retail Innovators

Quick Facts

About Thalia

Thalia is the market-leading omnichannel bookseller in the DACH region with around 6,000 employees.

Customers can shop around the clock in a network of around 380 bookstores in Germany and Austria, online shops and the Thalia app. In Switzerland, Thalia holds half of the shares in the 50+ bookstores of Orell Füssli Thalia AG.

The omnichannel bookseller generated sales of around €1.6 billion in the 2021/22 fiscal year – including all partner companies.

Challenge

Fast development and easy integration of add-ons for Thalia's new self-checkouts (SCO)

Flexible solution for the SCOs already takes into account the different requirements of Thalia bookstores in Switzerland and Austria

Seamless parallel operation of two separate technologies: the manned cash register and SCO must run side by side during the roll-out phase until the end of September 2024, when all Thalia cash registers will be converted to OmniPOS

Solution

Thalia can easily integrate web applications for its new SCOs using app enablement of the highly flexible GK OmniPOS solution package, without interfering with the core system or carrying out new software releases

A seamless data supply between the software solution of the manned cash register GK Retail 12 and the new solution for Thalia's SCOs has been ensured

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Overview

Increased Flexibility through Self-checkouts

Thalia is the leading omnichannel bookseller in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. With the installation of self-checkout terminals – as an addition to the manned cash register – the bookstore specialist wants to improve the shopping experience for customers and streamline internal processes.

In the summer of 2022, Thalia started the self-checkout project together with its technology partner GK, whose GK Retail 12 checkout solution has been in use at the book retailer's manned cash registers for many years. The technological basis of the SCOs at Thalia – and in the future all Thalia cash registers – is GK's highly flexible OmniPOS cash register solution. "The aim is to relieve pressure on the checkout area of the bookstores at high-frequency times and avoid long queues at the cash registers. Thanks to the self-checkout, the trained booksellers who work at Thalia can concentrate more on advising customers,"

explains Stephanie Spurzem, Head of Sales Support at Thalia. The first SCOs were initially launched in selected pilot bookstores in February 2023. In the second stage of the project, all cash registers in the Thalia bookstores are to be converted to GK OmniPOS by the end of September 2024. A big advantage for the book retailer is that it can already implement the flexible solution on its new SCOs.

Before the customer starts the process, the OmniPOS checkout software, which Thalia uses to control the SCOs, does not hold any stored data on products, loyalty cards, vouchers

or coupons. The moment the customer scans items at the self-checkout terminals, the data is retrieved from the SAP backend and delivered in real time to the software of the SCOs. In order to guarantee a seamless data supply in the company's bookstores and headquarters, both types of GK's POS software were set up to work smoothly in parallel until all Thalia locations are converted to GK OmniPOS by the end of September 2024.

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Solution

„No matter what challenges arise, in this project group we have always managed to identify, analyze, plan and solve the challenges very quickly. It all worked perfectly."

Francesco Di Maggio,
Manager SAP POS at Thalia

Agil | Powerful | Open

Thalia plans to completely switch all cash registers in all its bookstores to GK's highly flexible OmniPOS solution package. This system enables Thalia and its bookstore network to be adaptable going forward, with the facility to integrate external apps into the solution.

"We used this project to further optimize the collaboration between Thalia and GK. We're seeing huge benefits: We are much faster and no longer require significant additional effort when it comes to driving new release or product updates. It's a great advantage that OmniPOS gives us the opportunity to integrate our own apps into the checkout. As a result, we see ourselves today at an operational level as a large cross-location and cross-company project team that works together on solutions," enthuses Francesco Di Maggio, summarizing the agile team and project structure.

App enablement allows Thalia's developers to plan, implement and retrofit new features, such as the product-related age rating, on their own. Feature requests from Thalia's sales employees can also be launched much faster.

"There will always be topics relating to the self-checkouts that we want to develop further in an agile way. This is a living product. We are now in a much better position to do this thanks to GK OmniPOS. We no longer have major dependencies on resources at GK. This makes planning much easier and is exactly the effect we wanted," explains Francesco Di Maggio, SAP POS Manager at Thalia.

What is GK OmniPOS?

GK OmniPOS is a platform for all branch processes that offers a complete service package for the orchestration of all business processes in the branch. GK OmniPOS overcomes the barriers between sales channels and makes the point of sale the central hub of retail. Uniform data management and clear communication structures ensure consistent processes. The standard solution can be specially tailored to the requirements of the respective dealer through expansions and is not tied to any particular device.

With the GK OmniPOS solution, Thalia can flexibly respond to market requirements thanks to expansion options via app enablement and quickly offer new services for customers. Add-ons fit seamlessly into the checkout infrastructure.

Smooth Roll-out

Thalia was able to very quickly roll out the SCOs developed for the individual requirements of the company. The SCOs were introduced during operating hours, without bookstores having to close due to renovation work.

All components are seamlessly coordinated, which prevents duplication of work and additional costs.

There have been no notable errors since piloting. The project team was able to work together using agile methodology to solve all challenges related to the roll-out of the SCOs.

Francesco Di Maggio states: "In our experience, we have always been able to work through new tasks with GK as a partner very quickly, with a friendly and high quality approach, and thus solve any challenges."

The user interface of the SCOs is intuitive and self-explanatory. Most customers use the terminal quite naturally and record their goods, loyalty cards and coupons without any problems. Paying with a card also works smoothly. The SCOs have been well received. Thalia is hearing a lot of positive feedback from customers and employees.

Outlook

As of May 2023, 47 Thalia bookstores were equipped with around 150 SCOs. Further locations in Germany will follow. Bookstores in Austria and Switzerland are also to be equipped with SCOs as the project progresses.

The OmniPOS app enablement has brought the cross-company and cross-location project team of Thalia and GK colleagues much closer together. There are many ideas for new features in the pipeline and these can now be implemented much faster and more efficiently with the powerful OmniPOS solution.

"Many colleagues from all areas have excellent ideas for new features for the checkout – which makes us very happy. We are not running out of ideas for further improvements," promises Stephanie Spurzem

"We used this project to further optimize the collaboration between Thalia and GK. We're seeing huge benefits."

Francesco Di Maggio,
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