



American Stores Counts on Symbol Spectrum24®

American Stores, one of the United States' leading food and drug retailers, has installed Symbol Technologies wireless local area network (LAN) infrastructure and handheld scanning computing appliances to enhance worker productivity and customer service.

American Stores was recently acquired by Albertson's supermarket chain. Prior to the acquisition, American Stores operated 1,558 stores in 25 states including 267 food and drug combination stores, 540 supermarkets and 751 standalone drug stores, as well as 1,105 pharmacies within its stores. American Stores' principal retail operations include Acme Markets, Jewel Food Stores, Lucky Stores, Osco Drug and Sav-On Drugs, which are now all part of the Albertson's conglomerate. This case study analysis refers to the identified needs and solutions implemented at American Stores prior to the transaction.

The Challenge: Enhance Productivity and Customer Service

The goals of achieving increased worker productivity and customer service are universal throughout the retail food and drug market. However, American Stores needed to take its solution one step further: the implemented system had to incorporate scalability; delivering the required benefits of immediate worker productivity improvement while providing a migration path that would allow the solution to keep pace with American Store's anticipated future growth.

American Stores' applications are in line with most large food and drug retailers. The company needed to address everyday tasks including shelf price audit, direct store delivery and order entry. The critical advantage of eliminating price checks and mistakes through automated bar code solutions would speed lines at checkout, improving customer service and satisfaction.

The Symbol Solution: Mobile Computers and Spectrum24®

To achieve American Stores' goals, Symbol implemented a solution in which employees utilize Symbol with integrated bar code laser scanning capabilities and .

The wireless PDT 6840s make price checking and inventory management a simpler task. The need for hardwiring is eliminated, and employees gain the freedom of mobility throughout the store.

Spectrum24's open architecture wireless network provides reliable high performance data and voice over-IP communications with excellent immunity to interference through its frequency hopping technology—an important consideration in strip mall retail environments where street-based RF communications from sources such as delivery trucks and taxicabs, as well as in-store cellular phone use from shoppers calling home to verify item purchases are commonplace.

Spectrum24 supports the IEEE 802.11 wireless LAN standard, operating in the 2.4 Ghz band using spread spectrum modulation. Now, American Stores benefits from fast, seamless roaming with loadbalancing among cells. The system's capacity and range are expandable through the incorporation of additional access points, meeting American Store's need for scalability while maintaining their initial investment in the technology.

Today, employees chain-wide verify shelf pricing, implement item price changes, manage the receiving and putaway of store deliveries and perform order entry wirelessly. The information is automatically communicated to the host system through Symbol's Spectrum24 wireless LAN, where the incoming data enables real-time decision-making by American Stores executives for pricing, inventory and delivery. "We chose Symbol as a technology partner to provide in-store wireless LAN and computing solutions based on their superior technology solutions and their commitment to service," said John Eversman, vice president of retail technology, American Stores. "We invested in a wireless LAN technology that gives us benefits today and will grow with us into the future."

The Symbol Summary: American Stores	
Application: The implementation of a wireless local area network (LAN) infrastructure and handheld scanning computers to enhance employee productivity and customer service.	Environment: : One of the United States' leading food and drug retailers, with over 1,500 stores in 25 states, including Lucky Stores, Jewel Food Stores, Acme Markets, Osco Drug and Sav-On Drug.
Benefits: Increased efficiency for everyday in-store applications, such as shelf price audit, direct store delivery and order entry. Improved customer satisfaction at checkout through accurate price scanning and the reduction of errors and customer complaints.	Solution: Symbol wireless handheld mobile computers with integrated bar code laser scanning capabilities, linked to a .