

Standing Up to the Pressure

Posiflex USA builds machines to withstand the demanding environments of today's quick-serve restaurants.

Moisture. Heat. Grease. Enemies of electronics everywhere, but in a quick-serve environment? Those enemies can bring a POS unit down, hampering service, letting cars back up at the drive-thru, and, ultimately, in the worst-case scenario, sending customers to a competitor.

"It's not unusual for 60 to 70 percent of business to come from the drive-thru window on any given day," says Doyle Ledford, Vice President of Sales at Posiflex, USA, a design and manufacturing firm for point of sale terminals used worldwide in the quick-service industry. "If a terminal fails on the front counter, there are still three to four registers to use, but if it fails at the drive-thru... how do I re-route a car? The loss of revenue can be huge. One failure costs revenue and customer confidence, and those customers may not come back. The costs compound."

Posiflex POS terminals meet the tasks at hand in the environment of quick service restaurants, and in a market where operators may not be looking to replace a system, the company has to go beyond sales presentations to show how its machines stand out from the crowd.

"In a photograph, our terminal may not look different, but we can open a machine up in a potential customer's lab and show them how we differ," says Ledford. "We understand the concept (of the quick-service industry), and we build our products to withstand the operating environments."

When Posiflex opens up one of its machines, customers can see how components are placed and protected from airborne grease, flour, and particles—a volatile environment for any piece of electronic equipment—that can shut a system down. "If we can provide extra years of uninterrupted service, then we've given our customers something more as a result of our design and engineering," says Ledford.

Besides durability and reliability, operators purchasing new hard-



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ware worry that a new system won't be compatible with the expensive current software already in use. "These machines are built to an open standard, and we can run virtually any application. End users have no need to concede or forfeit what they are already using," says Ledford. Evaluation equipment allows potential buyers to see, touch, and feel the difference.

Of course, another challenge is overcoming the cost factor. Replacing hardware is an investment, and the industrial-strength components Posiflex uses ensure longevity. This approach might be more costly upfront, but that investment pays off over the longer lifespan of the equipment, and less business is lost to down-time.

Once customers come on board with Posiflex, a strong support system serves those customers should they need it. "We offer support before and after the sale," says Ledford, and the company offers as much or as little support (should a client want to use its own in-house support staff) as requested.

At the same time, Posiflex is open to helping its customers solve problems, even if those problems are not necessarily technical problems. "One c-store operator approached us with an idea and needed modification of the cashier station. We went to a metal manufacturer to create the solution so the operator didn't have to re-fabricate the countertops," says Ledford.

The future holds development opportunities in kiosk business and hand-held devices, although Ledford to date sees

limited deployment in the industry. "Our goal is not only to help reduce labor, but to increase accuracy and efficiency. Technologically simple devices do that: they lower labor and increase efficiency and accuracy, which lowers waste and food costs and increases customer satisfaction."

And in the end? That's the name of the game.