

Case Study

Smart and Final Stores, Inc.

Client: Founded in 1871 as Hellman-Haas Grocery Company, the company later took the name of its owners, J.S. Smart and H.D. Final and now operates 240+ stores in California, Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Florida, and northern Mexico. Billed as the Smaller, Faster Warehouse Store, Smart & Final sells food, foodservice products and professional-quality culinary equipment through warehouse stores, wholesale stores and broadline foodservice distribution businesses.

"Superior customer service is the cornerstone of our success. When fully implemented, the digital receipt solution will give all of our customers the ability to securely view their receipt details and related purchase information on our website. In addition, our analysis indicates that the TransAccess[®] solution will enable us to generate significant cost savings by streamlining key business processes and enhancing our loss prevention capability."

Bob Graham, Vice President - Store Systems Smart and Final Stores, Inc.

Challenge: To increase the service level for its business customers while leveraging the infrastructure deployed to enhance the overall shopping experience for both the business customers and household consumers. The goal was to initially solve a specific customer service issue and then expand the use to fully exploit the solutions capability.

Solution: Implement a Digital Receipt Solution that could provide immediate customer service benefits in the area of Bank Card and Private Label Charge Card dispute resolution. Once successfully deployed Smart and Final then began to use the TransAccess ReceiptsPLUS infrastructure to deliver secure, unique views of the transaction detail across the extended enterprise: including both customers and suppliers in the process.

By allowing access to transaction data near real time through the digital receipt infrastructure, Smart and Final can deliver sales data to a produce supplier while at the same time a business customer accesses the system to handle a transaction inquiry - all without direct intervention by Smart and Final Customer Service personnel. For both Suppliers and Customers, the ability to deliver these views is enabled by the TransAccess ReceiptsPLUS infrastructure which aggregates data from several sources to provide a single view of who bought what, where, when, how much and how it was paid.

The power of the solution lies in the ability to utilize a single data source to deliver solutions that affect every facet of retail. Whether using to solve a customer services issue regarding a credit card dispute, delivering a unique marketing message at the customer level or providing a tool to increase collaboration with suppliers, the same infrastructure delivers a timely, meaningful and accurate picture of all transaction details.

The Results: "Thanks to 'Digital Receipts' we have a lot of happy customers."

Joan Chism, Customer Services Manager - Finance and Accounting Smart and Final Stores, Inc.

Improved Customer Service: Using AfterBOT's TransAccess Solution, credit service representatives can now resolve transaction inquiries in under 1 minute, a significant savings in both time and labor. As a result, all inquiries can be handled same day - resulting in a much quicker resolution and enhancing customer service efforts. In addition, the faster resolution increases cash flow - by reducing Days Revenue Outstanding for Private Label Card Operations and providing a quick turnaround on funds that are in dispute with banks.

Supplier Collaboration: The introduction of AfterBOT's TransAccess for suppliers enabled one of Smart and Final's leading suppliers to begin accessing "sell through" data near real time providing the information necessary to streamline the ordering process. The result is reduced inventory levels, increased product yield and significant improvements in sales, margins and profitability.

Customer Satisfaction: The Customer view or "My Smart and Final" is currently in the customer testing phase. Its purpose is to improve customer satisfaction by enabling customers to directly access transaction details via a secure web connection. The solution enables customers to import transaction details into money management tools, provides enhanced customer service options and enables the delivery of unique marketing messages that relate directly to a customers buying preferences. The final results will be posted here when "My Smart & Final" becomes accessible to all of its customers.