



THE CASE FOR CASH IN SELF-CHECKOUT

HOW CASH AUTOMATION BROUGHT
NEW LEVELS OF EFFICIENCY TO
MAPLEFIELDS C-STORES



Maplefields is a chain of convenience stores across New Hampshire, New York and Vermont with 47 company-owned and operated locations. They've implemented Paypods in most of their locations already and will have them in 100% of stores by Q1 2024.

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I'm the Director of Technology for Maplefields. I've been with the company for 25 years, starting out as a store manager and working through the ranks. I love working with new technology and am able to use that passion to find tech that moves our company forward.

Describe to me what the customer checkout experience was like in your store before self-checkout.

Before self-checkout, our checkout process was pretty standard. Customers would pick up their items, checkout and pay with a cashier then be on their way.

What made you look into self-checkout?

When COVID hit, we not only put up plexiglass but actually turned around the scanners so that customers could scan their own items and avoid unnecessary touchpoints. We didn't get any pushback on this and found that customers appreciated being able to handle their own product. This realization is what led to us adopting self-checkout.

What were you trying to accomplish – what was driving your decision-making?

Our main goals were to be more efficient and provide customers with the checkout experience they wanted. We saw that lots of customers wanted to get in and out quickly, and our limited number of staff made the checkout experience even slower. So, we ended up looking into self-checkout as a way to counteract the effects of labor shortages and make checkout quicker.

How did you go about researching self-checkout?

I actually went to different stores and watched the self-checkout process in action to get an idea of what people's experiences were like. Was it intuitive to them? Did they wait for somebody to help them? How was traffic flowing through the self-checkout?

How did you evaluate which self-checkout partner to choose?

This was a pretty easy decision since I already had a relationship with CPI because we used their coin recyclers. So, when we started looking at CPI for self-checkout, we found out that a lot of CPI's products were in stores that I was already looking at as examples. It just made sense for us to partner with a familiar company who have already established themselves in the industry.

How did the custom experience/flow change/improve once you implemented self-checkout?

Once we implemented self-checkout, it allowed customers in a hurry to complete their transactions much quicker, letting them get in and out of the store in significantly less time than with just attended lanes.

What is something you know now that you wish someone had told you when you started this process?

Something invaluable that I learned is that you can't implement self-checkout piece by piece. If you just install a single self-checkout, you won't be able to reap all the benefits. You really need to do it wholeheartedly and not just dip your toes in. Another thing is that your staff has to buy into it. You need to demystify the myth that people will lose their jobs because that is not the case.

“WITH CPI, PEOPLE ACTUALLY WORKED WITH ME TO MAKE SURE I UNDERSTOOD THE PRODUCT THAT SUPPORT IS CRITICAL, ESPECIALLY IN THIS INDUSTRY'S FAST-MOVING ENVIRONMENT.”



“IN THIS INDUSTRY, AND MANY OTHER INDUSTRIES, THE WORKFORCE IS SLIM AND LIMITED - BEING ABLE TO AUTOMATE CASH PAYMENTS WITH PAYPOD KEEPS OUR DOORS OPEN.”

I know a lot of convenience retailers are considering self-checkout, but we see a lot of deployments without cash. What would you say to those decision-makers to help them make the right choice?

Anyone considering this needs to think long and hard because they're actually alienating a portion of the populace that carries cash. What this does is negatively impact cash users who can't use self-checkout just because they're paying with cash. It takes a long time to gain a customer's trust, but it only takes a second for them to never walk through the door again.

What is the percentage of cash transactions daily/weekly?

The percentage of cash transactions across the board varies, but I think if we had to average it out, it would be roughly 15% cash and then 85% electronic payment or card. Having said that, it could be 30% cash in certain stores like our touristy locations or college towns.

Why was cash an essential part of your self-checkout?

We included cash acceptance out of convenience for the customer. We don't want to give customers a chance to say, "You don't accept cash so I'm not coming back."

How has cash automation helped you?

Manually handling cash can be very time-consuming. If someone is paying with a \$20 bill, the cashier is counting the coin, they're taking it out, they're counting out the bills, they're giving it back to the customer. The automated process takes it all away. So now if it's a cash transaction, the customer can be in and out the door in 20 seconds.

How was working with the CPI different than you expected/different than other suppliers you've worked with?

Working with CPI made the entire process run very smoothly. For the first few rollouts, we had technicians come to help with the installations and make sure everything was running properly. It's been great working with people who are so knowledgeable, supportive and responsive.

What unique value did the team deliver to help support you in this evolution?

A lot of the time when you buy a product, the company will leave you to your own devices in terms of getting everything set up. With CPI, people actually worked with me to make sure I understood the product. That support is critical, especially in this industry's fast-moving environment.

What were some benefits you saw after implementing the self-checkout with Paypod?

We've noticed that we don't have lines anymore. People are now able to get in and out without having to wait to check out. This has freed us up to give our employees a less stressful working experience and allow them to spend more time focusing on improving the customer's experience as well.

Would you recommend Paypods for stores? If yes, what's the main reason you recommend?

Absolutely. In this industry, and many other industries, the workforce is slim and limited. Being able to automate cash payments with Paypod keeps our doors open. During the peak of COVID, we had almost every employee call out sick, but were still able to operate because we had four Paypods installed to take payments alongside the one cashier that was working.

Tell us a little bit about your business, how many stores, operations etc.

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