

Pyrmont SUPA IGA opens for business with Toshiba TEC POS solutions



When Vasili Karellas, Managing Director of the Karellas Group, opened his third SUPA IGA supermarket in October 2006, he did so with a degree of fanfare that left Sydneysiders in no doubt as to presence of the new store. While visitors were able to enjoy a week-long series of music and food themed activities, the serious business of supermarket retail was being carried out in the building that once housed Festival Records Studio A – and it was Toshiba TEC POS terminals that were quite literally keeping the lanes open for business.

No room for “the flimsy”

With no less than ten of its 14 lanes operating 14 hours a day, SUPA IGA Pyrmont is a high volume operation with customers who, like most people, have little patience for supermarkets that make them wait endlessly at the check-out. Karellas understands this all too well, and is a man not prepared to put up with equipment that is unable to support his staff in delivering the best possible customer experience.

For that reason, Karellas partnered with Toshiba TEC solution provider WorldSmart Retech on establishing the optimum POS setup for his new store. There was only one acceptable proposal – a Toshiba TEC ST-7000 Modular POS Terminal (running the WorldSmart Retech Grocery Manager software), Navkey LKBST-65 touch screen and DRWST-51 cash drawer, solution.

In commenting on the rationale behind recommending the Toshiba TEC solution to Karellas, WorldSmart Retech NSW State Manager, David Westhorpe, says, “The reliability of the equipment is really second to none. In my experiences, I’ve never heard of an out-of-box failure relating to Toshiba TEC equipment; and that’s in contrast to what I’ve seen with equipment from a number of other vendors.”



"This is equipment that has been designed specifically to perform faultlessly in the supermarket environment. So it's a sure bet that whenever I open a new store, the Toshiba TEC POS solutions will be on every lane. I wouldn't be prepared to risk my business again with equipment from another vendor."

Vasili Karellas
Managing Director
Karellas Group



That same sentiment is echoed strongly by Karellas, but with a great deal more emphasis. “To be frank, I was sick and tired of the flimsy POS equipment we were dealing with at another store before we brought in the Toshiba TEC gear,” he says.

In explaining the problems he was having with the third-party equipment, Karellas says that at least twice a week he would be called in to recalibrate a touch-screen. “Like any business owner, I value my time quite highly; and having to be constantly on call to deal with POS problems means I’m *losing* money,” he states. “Since we’ve been using the Navikey touch-screens, there hasn’t been a single instance of lost calibration.”

Keeping the lanes open

One of the harsh realities of technology is that equipment, regardless of how reliable, will require service and maintenance throughout its life. What makes a difference, though, is the frequency this is required and – just as importantly – the manner in which it is carried out. According to Karellas, this is definitely an area in which Toshiba TEC has brought about major business benefits.

“One of the things that has continually impressed me about dealing with Toshiba TEC is the way in which they carry out their servicing,” Karellas says. “The service people know precisely what equipment we have in each store, and when they come out, they always have a full range of spares with them just in case anything needs to be taken back for repairs. If that happens, they can replace it with the spare and my lanes stay open.

“Where Toshiba TEC also takes the line honours when it comes to service, is the technical knowledge the service people have,” Karellas continues. “They know their equipment inside out, so there are very few instances where a service call requires replacement. They generally fix things on the spot and without any hassle.

“Compare this to what it was like previously - the level of service was so bad from the other vendor that most times I didn’t even bother calling them. It wasn’t worth the hassle, and was actually quicker for me to try and fix it myself.”

Taking the rough

The supermarket environment is far from being a friendly one for POS equipment. Operators punch away at touch screens and keypads, customers are prone to leaning on equipment or accidentally running into it with their trolleys and even cleaning products have their impact.

“No matter how many times I’ve told my staff not to spray the equipment with cleaner, it’s a sure bet they do it anyway,” Karellas says with a wry smile. “If they did that to the old equipment, we’d be in for a system failure. Now, even though I keep trying to convince them it’s the wrong thing to do, there are some who still spray. The good thing is, that Toshiba TEC has thought about this, and there hasn’t any sign of a problem.”

Precisely the same goes for the sturdiness of the Navikey – a product that has been designed to withstand almost anything the supermarket retail environment can throw at it. With a solidly built swivel mount, the Navikey is not prone to the breakage problems that tend to plague various other third-party products. “It all comes back to being solid at every level – performance and reliability,” Karellas states.

Toshiba TEC stays!

Never the sort of person to rest on his laurels, Karellas is constantly planning ahead, with several new IGA stores set to be opened by him over the next few years. And the role of Toshiba TEC POS equipment? Well, according to Karellas, there’s little doubt or question. “This is equipment that has been designed specifically to perform faultlessly in the supermarket environment,” he says. “So it’s a sure bet that whenever I open a new store, the Toshiba TEC POS solutions will be on every lane. I wouldn’t be prepared to risk my business again with equipment from another vendor.”

For more information on TOSHIBA TEC Point Of Sale solutions, please call (02) 8845 6222 or visit www.toshibatec.com.au

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