

Clareville Cellars takes on the competition with a Toshiba TEC POS solution



When Brett Sheather and his business partner established a new bottle shop in Sydney's Northern Beaches suburb of Clareville in mid-2008, there was little indication of what would be regarded as one of Australia's most severe economic downturns. Yet despite recession, alcohol tax increases and strong competition, Clareville Cellars is a clear case of retail business success being achieved by means of a focus on customer service and utilising a Toshiba TEC-based POS solution for high levels of business efficiency and management.

Challenge: Beat the competition

With four other bottleshops located within a small radius, Brett and his business partner knew that winning out against the competition would require a level of customer service that was second to none. With that in mind they built Clareville Cellars from the ground up, worked to understand their customer-base, drew extensively on Brett's 22 years of experience in the retail and wholesale liquor industry, then set out to find a comprehensive POS solution designed to fit their business requirements.

Solution: Toshiba TEC

Instead of relying on POS system sales pitches, Brett went out and spoke to the people who best know the value of POS systems in the bottleshop industry – other bottleshop owners. "I spent a lot of time talking to those people," he says, "asking them what systems they thought were best – and why – and which POS solution providers really knew what they were talking about when it came to this industry."

Ultimately, it came down to a comprehensive solution from a Toshiba TEC partner, which consisted of two Toshiba TEC WILLPOS A10 POS Terminals running advanced POS software, along with Toshiba TEC cash drawers and thermal printers.



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Brett Sheather
Manager
Clareville Cellars



Total business control and management

In discussing the benefits the Toshiba TEC solution affords the business, Brett is quick to point out that it's significantly more than a digital cash register. "With the one system," he says, "I'm able to control virtually every aspect of the business from accounts right through to stock management, and gain a clear insight into what's happening *with* the business."

That "clear insight" Brett refers to is of particular value when it comes to ensuring Clareville Cellars' customers have the best range of products from which to choose. With the ability to generate printed and on-screen reports that show purchase histories and trends, the POS system plays a crucial role in helping Brett better understand the purchase patterns of his customers.

"Purchase patterns change from suburb to suburb," Brett explains, "and what might be poor sellers in one suburb might well be in high demand in another. With this system, I can see what products our customers prefer and adjust my stock accordingly. As a result I'm maximising the efficiency of stock control and making sure we're always able to provide precisely what our customers want."

Doubling up on functionality

With two WILLPOS A10s on the counter, even the fast and furious activity during high-demand periods such as Christmas are dealt with easily. During the slower times, though, Brett makes full use of having the two units, using one of them as his business personal computer.

Along with its internal hard drive and interface ports for a keyboard, mouse, USB-enabled peripherals and networking, the WILLPOS A10 functions just as well as a PC as it does an industry leading integrated POS terminal. So instead of having to spend well over a thousand dollars on a separate PC, Brett runs all his business applications, including spreadsheet, word processor, email and Web from one of the WILLPOS A10s.

"It takes only the push of a button to switch between the POS software and my Windows desktop," Brett says. "And what I've found particularly interesting is that when the WILLPOS A10 operates as a Windows PC, it's every bit as fast and reliable as a dedicated high-end computer."

On that issue of reliability, Brett states that the Toshiba TEC-based solution – the terminal, cash drawer, printer and POS software – is precisely what's needed in today's point-of-sale systems. "Even though customers might take their time making selections, they're generally not prepared to be kept waiting at the point of sale," Brett says.

"With this system, transactions are processed immediately and both the software and hardware have obviously been designed to operate faultlessly. It means we're able to carry our practice of outstanding customer service right through to the point of sale."

Maximising space

An added benefit of the WILLPOS A10 for Clareville Cellars is the unit's small footprint, which maximises available counter space and, according to Brett, increases impulse purchases. He explains: "With the cash drawers installed under the counter and the POS terminals requiring minimal space, we've been able to place snack items on the counter without cluttering the point-of-sale area."

"In doing that we've found that sales of those items are much more than would have been the case if we had been forced to locate them elsewhere."

In line with the WILLPOS A10's small footprint is a sleek award-winning design, which is in keeping with the aesthetics and atmosphere of Clareville Cellars. "We spent a sizeable amount of time, money and effort on creating a unique environment," Brett says. "We have a 48-inch television tuned in to a sports channel, old timbers, good quality carpets and even an absence of all the marketing material you might expect to see in a bottleshop."

"From that perspective, the Toshiba TEC terminals are a perfect fit. They're stylish, unobtrusive and actually look like they belong on our counter."

"It all comes down to proving the point made by those other bottleshop owners I spoke to when I was researching POS systems," Brett continues. "This *is* the best system."