

WHITE PAPER

Self-service in food retailing

How weighing technology and information technology offer support in self-service areas

Ever-changing customer requirements for more flexibility, autonomy and transparency when shopping for food present grocery retailers with a real challenge. In response they are developing and implementing new store concepts, because the growing demand for non-packaged food items that can be selected based on the quantity and quality required is necessitating flexible self-service concepts. In this form of autonomous shopping, the customers themselves play an active role in selecting the products they wish to buy and they also benefit from less queuing. Retailers who implement self-service concepts ease their employees' workload, reduce labor and training costs, and benefit from higher productivity and greater customer satisfaction.

Drawing on our many years of market knowledge and industry experience, we at Bizerba have developed a solution that fully addresses the changing demands in grocery retailing today: the new MC 500 self-service scale. We want to help you benefit from our know-how, which is why we have compiled this white paper providing information and recommendations to support you in the development and implementation of your self-service concept.

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1. Introduction

Whether in the form of self-check-in at the airport, an automated ticket machine at a train station or a self-service checkout at a home-furnishings store, the self-service trend is increasingly taking hold in all areas of our daily lives. In a self-service concept, consumers complete the majority of the shopping process themselves. They often even perform the barcode scanning, weighing and payment activities autonomously.¹ Self-service appeals to their desire for more flexibility, independence and freedom when shopping, and enables them to dictate their own product choices and pace. Meanwhile, for grocery retailers, self-service opens up opportunities for them to relieve the pressure on their often over-stretched workforce, reduce labor and training costs, and optimize workflows and operational processes.

According to the EHI Retail Institute, 52% of German citizens are already familiar with self-checkout systems and at least 20% make active use of them.²

The trend towards self-service has already reached the food retail sector, and is by far no longer limited to the so-called "fast lanes" at the checkout. Self-service weighing has had proven success in fresh food categories, such as the fresh fruit and vegetable department, for many years. In addition, there is growing demand for products to be sold loose rather than pre-packed, so self-service weighing is gaining in importance. Needless to say, this varies in line with cultural preferences and requirements.

As a world-leading company specialized in weighing and slicing technology, Bizerba has been quick to recognize this trend and has developed a practically oriented solution for self-service departments. In this white paper, we will provide concise industry-specific information to demonstrate how you can develop and implement a new self-service concept successfully.

2. Current trends in food retailing

A KPMG study on the future of shopping (2014) predicted that food retailing would undergo a substantial transition. The reasons: customer requirements and expectations have changed considerably in recent years and shoppers now place importance on factors such as flexibility, speed, product diversity, health, transparency and environmental awareness.³

Flexibility and spontaneity

Everyday life is becoming increasingly flexible and spontaneous, with fewer and fewer people having a fixed daily routine. Longer store opening hours and a wide range of online shopping opportunities and delivery options are all contributing to the traditional weekly visit to the grocery store being replaced by numerous smaller and more spontaneous impulse buys.⁴ More than 54% of German consumers visit a supermarket at least three times a week.⁵ Moreover, the grocery shopping of 58-66% of all consumers is driven by spontaneous impulse purchases.⁶ The weekly meal plan has clearly become a thing of the past.⁷ Nowadays, a large majority of consumers don't decide what to put into their baskets until they are actually in the store. Many of those consumers allow themselves to be influenced by emotional and functional cross-selling messages that inspire them with meal ideas and food solutions, including recipe suggestions.

Speed and unlimited product diversity

According to surveys, the main irritation factors in supermarket environments include long queues and the stress in the bagging area at the checkout.⁸ For the majority of those surveyed, other factors are empty shelves and out-of-stock situations as well as having to search for products. That is a particular annoyance for many consumers as they are already short of time.⁹

In other words, the time aspect plays a decisive role in the shopping behavior of today's consumers. They are under chronic time pressure which makes them grateful for every opportunity to save a few

precious minutes. To help customers finish their grocery shopping quickly, the fresh products should be presented clearly and a minimum number of steps should be necessary to weigh fresh items sold loose. Likewise, the subsequent checkout procedure should run quickly and smoothly.¹⁰

In addition, shoppers put a high value on a wide and diverse product range and individualized enjoyment.¹¹ There is a huge desire for unlimited product diversity. They demand an extensive choice of products and abundantly filled shelves round the clock.¹²

Health and transparency

The KPMG study also revealed that health remains the number one food-related topic.¹³ Consumers are making more conscious product choices and are spending ever-more money on healthy eating. Furthermore, as a result of the numerous food scandals in recent years, they are increasingly demanding more information and transparency.¹⁴ Especially in the case of fresh products sold loose, the threshold value for consumer trust is comparatively high.¹⁵

Environmental awareness

Rising environmental awareness and efforts to reduce unnecessary packaging waste have led to the concept of 'zero waste shopping'. This involves the shoppers themselves making decisions about the quantity, quality and packaging of products with the aim of contributing to environmentally friendly, ethical and sustainable consumer behavior. By filling reusable containers with loose-sold products, consumers can help to dramatically reduce packaging waste, as has already been demonstrated in countries such as Canada, Italy and the UK: the Canadian retail chain called Bulk Barn, which currently has around 2,000 stores, has been selling a wide range of non-packaged foodstuffs since as long ago as 1982.¹⁶ And in its three zero-waste shops the Italian supermarket organization Effecorta has successfully combined the trend towards loose-sold food items with the growing demand for regional produce.¹⁷ Meanwhile in London the 'unpackaged' concept of the British organic retailer called Planet Organic, which sells exclusively loose products completely free from all packaging, is gaining increasing consumer acceptance.¹⁸

3. Self-service in food retailing

The various trends in food retailing leave no room for doubt: the self-service concept, and in particular self-service weighing, is becoming increasingly important. At the same time, consumers and retailers alike benefit from considerable added value.

3.1. Benefits of self-service concepts from the consumer perspective

Flexibility and autonomy

In addition to the time aspect, the active involvement in the shopping process is another reason why customer demand for self-service concepts continues to grow. After all, consumers play a passive role in the conventional service-counter method. They have no direct influence over which products are selected and the speed of service. Moreover, the act of queuing reinforces their sense of passivity and time wasted unproductively. The fast-moving in-store processes also leave a negative impression on many shoppers, since they make it difficult for them to check prices and create stressful situations. Another common source of irritation is employees' rough handling of the products.¹⁹

In contrast, the new self-service concepts offer consumers a flexible, dynamic and self-determined shopping experience. A recent study by EHI Retail Institute shows that people in the 30-39 and 14-29 age groups appreciate this approach the most, but that older shoppers also benefit from this solution.²⁰ In contrast to sales via service counters, self-service weighing allows them to set their own shopping pace.²¹ Furthermore, all customers can closely inspect the products themselves and select the quality and quantity they require.²²

Direct price checks and the desired amount

Self-service weighing in the fresh produce department gives shoppers the control they desire over the price and product quantity.²³ This enables them to personalize their shopping experience and select precisely what they need in line with their specific situation, whether they are single or are buying for a large family. A bonus advantage is that consumers who select the items themselves contribute to more sustainable shopping behavior, which benefits not only the environment but also the retailer: rather than the whole pack of pre-packaged products having to be thrown away if even just one product has gone rotten, now only the unsalable items are disposed of, thus minimizing the financial losses.

3.2. Benefits of self-service concepts from the retailer perspective

Cost reduction and profitability

Ever-more retailers are choosing to implement self-service concepts because they help to reduce costs and hence improve their profitability. Firstly, self-service weighing delivers a substantial reduction in labor costs: employees no longer need to serve and advise shoppers or weigh the products for them so expensive, specially trained workers are no longer required. All that is needed is an employee to restock the product displays and keep an eye on the weighing equipment. This also minimizes the number of input errors due to checkout employees lacking detailed knowledge about the product range, which in turn eliminates - or at least significantly reduces - the need for costly and time-consuming product-related training for service and checkout employees.

Reduced pressure on employees and increased productivity

For grocery retailers, the self-service weighing concept primarily eases the burden on checkout staff and reduces queuing. Since products are no longer weighed at the point of sale, the checkout employees can serve more customers in less time. The result: a substantial increase in productivity, which has a positive effect on the grocery retailer's profitability.

More efficient customer service and greater customer satisfaction

The self-service concept in the fresh produce department boosts the efficiency of customer service and results in greater customer satisfaction. Since they no longer have to serve and advise shoppers, employees gain extra time which they can spend on re-stocking shelves, cleaning activities or replacing label rolls so that customers are not faced with hold-ups at the self-service weighing equipment.

A positive image and new customer groups

Grocery retailers who are willing to invest in new high-tech self-service concepts enjoy an image boost among their customers,²⁴ which in turn gives those retailers a competitive edge. The new, multifunctional store concepts also help the retailers to keep pace with the latest marketing developments and opportunities because the self-service scale is a fully fledged information and communication platform. It provides considerable added value to shoppers through cross-selling and up-selling concepts such as predefined combinations of ingredients and recipe suggestions. It also informs shoppers effectively about marketing campaigns and event-based themes such as "Italian Week".²⁵ These are all effective marketing measures that also attract and retain new, tech-savvy customers.²⁶

The advantages of the self-service concept for retailers are clear. Should they have any concerns that the implementation of self-service weighing will lead to an increase in theft and shrinkage, a survey by EHI Retail Institute successfully dispels them. It found that grocery retailers' experiences with self-service concepts are largely positive: 95% of those surveyed indicated that the introduction of self-service concepts had not affected the amount of theft or inventory discrepancies.²⁷ However, it is wise to take the same precautionary measures in the fresh food department as in all other areas of the store. Therefore, it is advisable to position the scales in clear view so that employees can keep a close eye on the weighing activities.

4. The MC 500 by Bizerba

How can a modern self-service solution fulfill the current wants and needs of grocery retailers and shoppers alike? In answer to this question Bizerba, the world's leading manufacturer of weighing and slicing technology has developed a state-of-the-art self-service scale: the attractive and practical MC 500. Demonstrating Bizerba's market-oriented approach, it is the first self-service scale that has been cleverly designed to save space without requiring placement on a base or a table. This makes it ideal for use in the fresh food department. Equally, it is designed to be multifunctional: whether weighing, label printing or providing product-related information and advice as well as advertising, it takes care of all the relevant self-service activities effortlessly.

4.1. The features of the MC 500



MC 500 stand-alone version



The integrated stand of the MC 500 stand-alone version, which can be optionally equipped with an oval base plate, eliminates the need for additional tables, bases or boxes, all of which take up extra space. Retailers can install the new MC 500 directly alongside the produce in their fresh fruit and vegetable department while retaining placement flexibility, making this the ideal solution for contemporary store concepts. And the practically focused Bizerba stand-alone design has also solved another problem experienced by many retailers on a daily basis: that the scales are switched off, either inadvertently by shoppers or in fun by children who think it is a game. The MC 500 self-service scale avoids this situation altogether, because the on/off button is hidden inside the scale itself. This important benefit contributes to the smooth-running of in-store processes.

MC 500 table-top version



If the scale must be placed in the product display area, the MC 500 is also available as compact table-top version. However, in this case an additional table or base is needed to position the scale. For a firm stand, the table-top version is supplied with an “angle bracket” installation kit, which is screwed into the base below and the scale is then slotted or locked into place.

Extra storage space in the stand

Empty label rolls are often a source of annoyance for shoppers. This means that they have to go in search of a member of staff, who then often first disappears into the stockroom in order to retrieve a new roll because there is usually nowhere to store them in the immediate vicinity of the fresh food display. That wastes a lot of valuable time, during which the scale is out of use. To avoid downtime situations of this kind, extra storage space has been created in the optional stand of the MC 500. Consumables and cleaning agents can be stored directly beneath the scale, concealed behind a cupboard door. The practical door also offers fast access for servicing and support purposes from both sides.

Ergonomic weighing tray or pan



The optimally ergonomic weighing tray of the MC 500 is designed in the shape of a fruit bowl to meet the needs of the weighing requirements in the fresh produce department. The raised edges and small recess in the center prevent loose products from rolling off while being weighed.

Alternatively, the MC 500 can be equipped with a flat weighing pan, e.g. for use with tare containers/boxes. Both, weighing tray and pan are dishwasher-safe and breakproof and offer problem-free removal of tray labels.

The integrated tilt compensation of the MC 500 ensures weighing precision, which benefits retailers and shoppers alike. The self-service scale has also been designed ergonomically to offer comfort and convenience during weighing. The weighing tray or pan is positioned at the optimal height for use by each and every shopper. Furthermore, they are easy to clean thanks to the Easy Fit functionality, which enables employees to remove, clean and replace the weighing trays and pans quickly. The practical bayonet lock provides additional support and prevents the weighing trays and pans tipping over if the weight is distributed unevenly.

15.6" color touch display



The large 15.6" color touch display offers shoppers clarity plus optimum comfort and convenience in use: The large screen provides them with an optimal overview while selecting and searching for items by either picture or number, enabling them to find the relevant products without a hitch. In addition, it enables transparent provision of information about the food products and the display of advertisements and promotional videos in brilliant image quality. As a result, shoppers have no hesitation whatsoever about using the scales and self-service becomes easy and intuitive.

Employees can tilt the screen into preset angles to adjust it to the lighting conditions, thus preventing reflections on the display.

Easy Clean housing

Grocery retailers often associate self-service weighing with dirty scale displays and housing, covered in fingerprints. This is a justifiable concern, especially in view of the large number of customers using the scales each day. Here, once again, Bizerba's MC 500 demonstrates its suitability for daily use. With its special texture, the Easy Clean surface of the housing repels dirt and makes it easier to remove stray labels that have become stuck to it. Even stubborn fingerprints are a thing of the past. The rimless display of the self-service scale prevents dirt collecting at the edges. All of these features substantially reduce the amount of effort involved for employees to clean the scales.

Reliable printer

Self-service scales are in constant use. To cope reliably with the demands of continuous operation, the MC 500 is fitted with a high-performance label printer. But not all labels are equal. To enable the goods to be scanned quickly at the checkout, the labels must be of sufficiently high quality: the barcode must be printed legibly – without smudges. That is why Bizerba has developed thermal labels that include a special coating. They prevent the build-up of dust which can cause the thermal strips in the printer to become dirty and to malfunction. Furthermore, the MC 500 facilitates effortless individual label design.



Powerful CPU

For optimal performance and graphics, the MC 500 is fitted with a powerful Intel Dual Core processor. Thanks to the processor no fan is required in the housing, which considerably reduces the energy consumption of the scale. The useful "Wake on LAN" function of the MC 500 enables a further cost saving. Up until now, grocery retailers also had to leave their scales on overnight or at the weekend so that updates could be installed, but now retailers can "wake up" their self-service scales - such as for maintenance tasks or updates - with a single command and can put them back into sleep mode afterwards.

4.2. Retail software

To fully meet retailers' needs, Bizerba offers networked hardware and software solutions. The range of retail software comprises countless solutions and supplementary RetailApps.



Automatic label information

For many grocery retailers, their workforce is already stretched to its limits, meaning it is often unclear who can take responsibility for monitoring the scales or replacing label rolls. Malfunctioning scales soon become a source of irritation for shoppers and in some cases can even result in loss of custom. To avoid this problem, the RetailPowerScale software in combination with the optional RetailApp PaperNearEnd running on the MC 500 automatically alerts employees to the fact that the current label roll has reached the pre-set minimum level. This enables a member of staff to replace the label roll before it runs out and causes downtime. Another software solution that tangibly eases the workload is RetailControl Business. This takes care of the complete update management, eliminating the time-consuming task of running updates manually and automatically ensuring that all scales are continuously fully up to date.

Integration of 3rd-party software

Drawing on its many years of industry experience and know-how, Bizerba has also developed a solution for retailers who want to use their existing software with Bizerba hardware: the RetailIntegratorsKit (RIK) software facilitates problem-free integration of the MC 500 with 3rd-party software. This makes it easy to integrate the MC 500 into the existing POS landscape and to connect it via software interfaces with the existing network of POS and ERP systems.

Real-time data management

Managing an ever-growing and ever-changing product portfolio can be a real challenge for grocery retailers. The product range, prices and product images must be checked and updated on a daily basis. That places considerable pressure on employees' time. Clearly, it is more efficient to manage and update the product data using the optional RetailApp KeyOrganizer. This enables seasonal products and other changes to be categorized, grouped together and presented in line with individual requirements.

Time-controlled applications

The RetailApp TimedAction allows time-controlled display of messages or the execution of promotions directly on the scale. To set up the relevant action, it is sufficient to simply enter a name, the start time and the type of process to be activated. Such actions can include the controlled shut-down of the scale at the end of the working day, for example, or to issue a useful reminder to employees that they should check the merchandise displays regularly. Hence, this supports the efficient and automated planning of in-store processes.

Transparent customer information

For faster and better communication with shoppers directly on the self-service scale, grocery retailers can utilize various RetailApps. The RetailApp GrossPricing gives customers the opportunity to compare the net price that is commonly used in the cash & carry sector with the gross price. This additional information appeals to a broader customer base and also addresses the need for more control over prices.

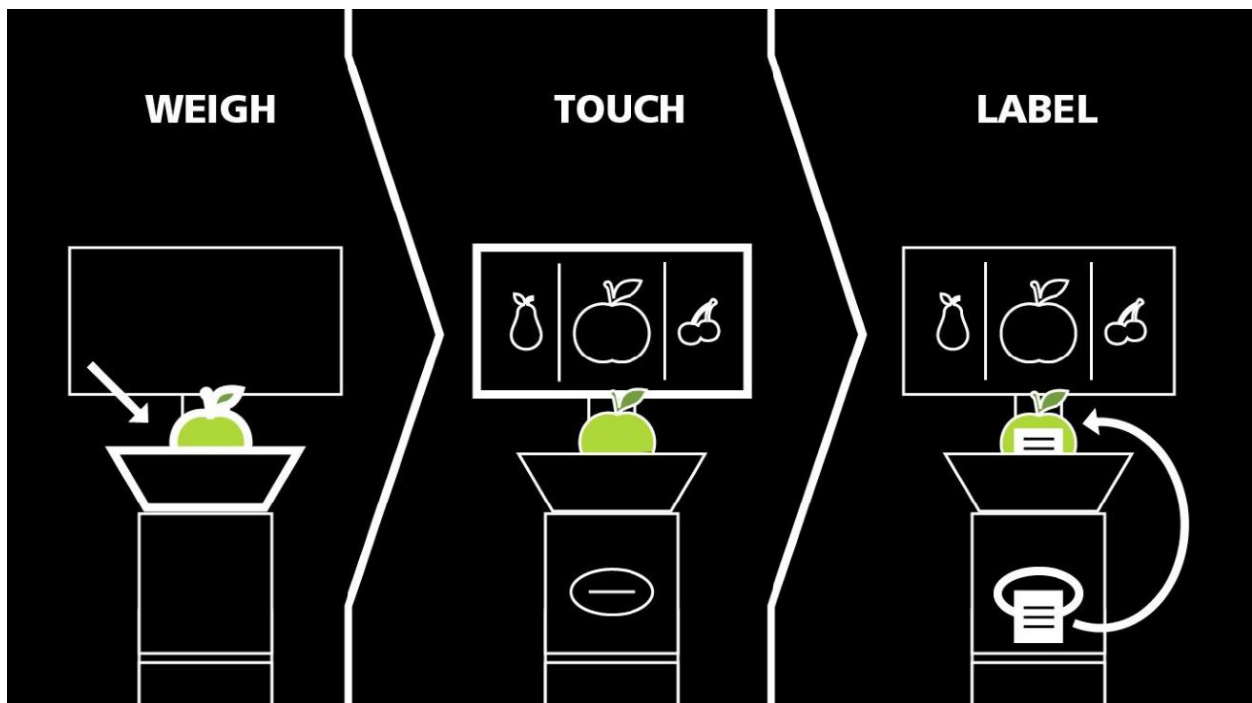
The growing consumer need for information is also reflected in shoppers' questions about the origin of food products and the ingredients they contain.²⁸ The RetailApp IngredientManager not only responds to consumers' needs but also complies with food labeling regulations. It comprises two components, namely AllergenManager and IngredientFinder, which can be used either individually or in combination.

Once the ingredients have been input into the keyword catalog, the RetailApp automatically takes care of the labeling based on predefined formatting requirements.

4.3. Concepts for product selection with the MC 500

When designing the user interface and navigation, Bizerba's priority was to make the product selection as shopper-friendly, straightforward and clearly structured as possible. This enables grocery retailers to develop self-service solutions in line with the composition of their customer base and product range, so that their customers can select and weigh the products they want easily, autonomously and without any problems. Clearly structured and straightforward weighing processes are particularly important in the case of items sold by weight, such as fruit and vegetables. The product selection must be easy for people of all ages to use, from youngsters to senior citizens. With the MC 500, shoppers can weigh their chosen items in just three steps:

1. **Weigh:** A shopper weighs the loose, unpackaged products, such as apples, on the self-service scales in the fresh food department.
2. **Touch:** The shopper selects the relevant product on the display (e.g. apple).
3. **Label:** The price label is printed out, including scannable barcode, and the customer attaches it to the goods.

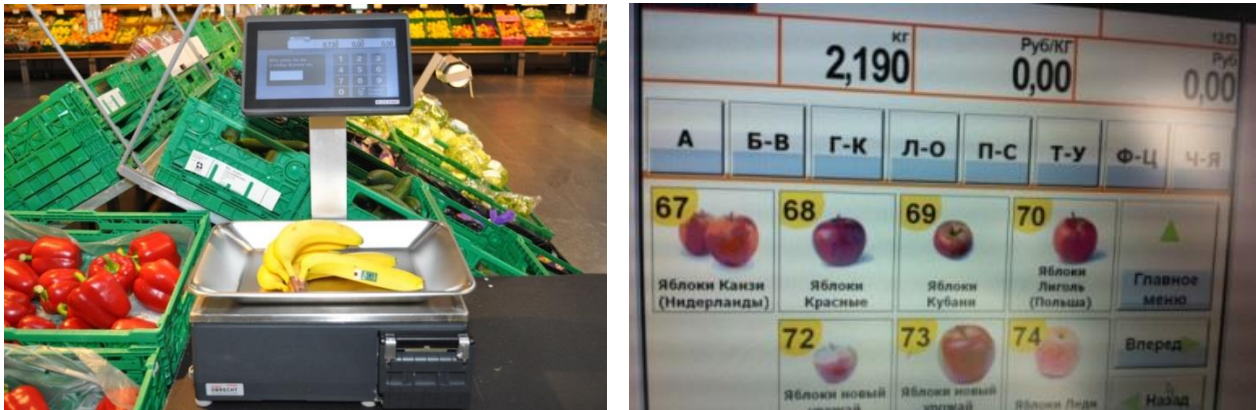


For the product search and selection step (Step 2: Touch) in self-service weighing, Bizerba offers various solution concepts which can be chosen individually in line with the retailer's customer base, product range and cultural considerations, as follows:

- Product selection based on PLU number
- Product selection based on category/product group
- Product selection based on alphabetical product search
- Product selection based on product pictures

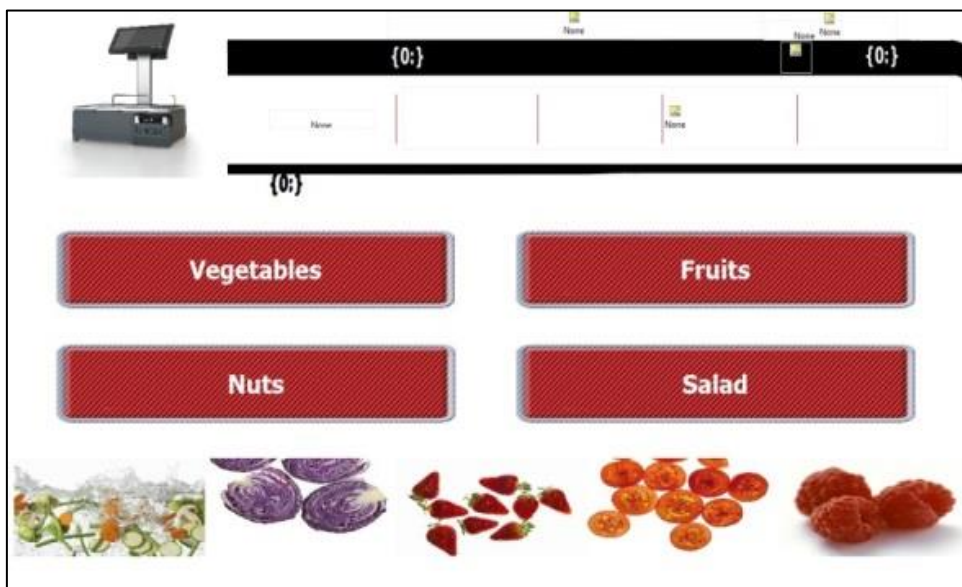
4.3.1. Product selection based on PLU number

In this solution model, a PLU number is assigned to each product. The same PLU number is displayed next to the relevant products on the shelf. The customer enters this PLU number via the user interface of the scale and the relevant price label is printed out.



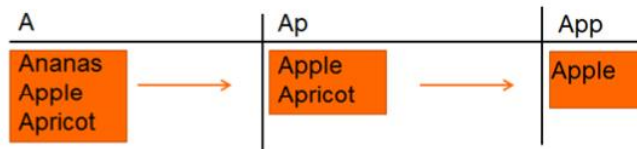
4.3.2. Product selection based on category/product group

The product search based on category groups (product groups) classifies the available product range according to sub-categories such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc.. Seasonal changes or additions to the product range can be easily maintained with the Bizerba **RetailPowerScale** software in combination with the **RetailApp KeyOrganizer**



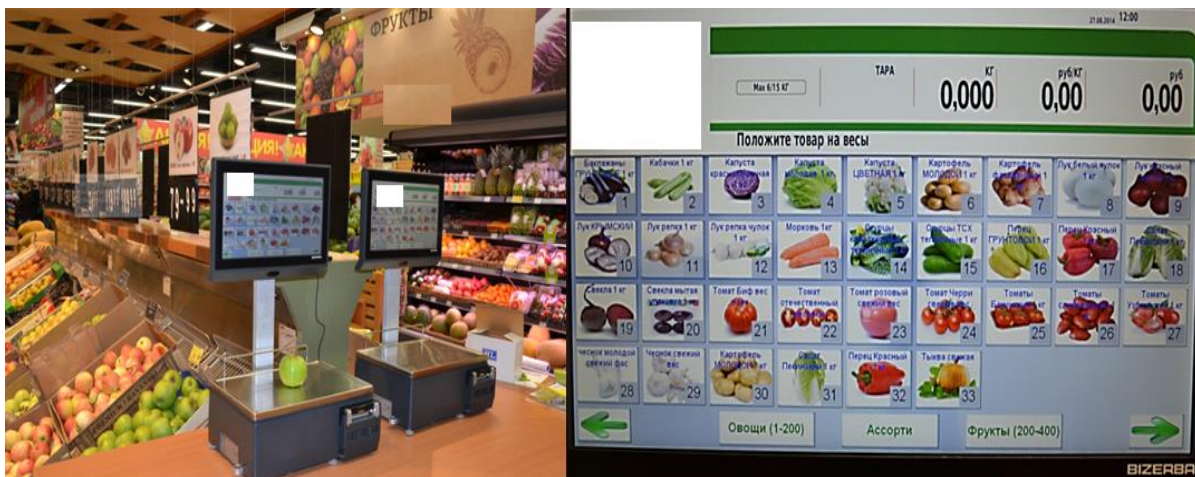
4.3.3. Product selection based on alphabetical product search

The alphabetical product selection is a further option for searching for and selecting items. The customer enters the first few letters of a product and the MC 500 filters further selection options to find items that meet the search criteria.



4.3.4. Product selection based on product pictures

This selection concept lets the customer choose the required item based on the relevant product picture. The user interface of the scale displays the product range as clearly recognizable pictures. In order to make it even easier for shoppers to select the right product, the pictures can also be accompanied by precise product descriptions.



4.3.5 Shopper-friendly labeling

Labeling is the final step in the product selection process at the self-service scale. The label quality contributes to the success of the self-service concept because labels fulfill a wide range of functions. The top layer and the right adhesive are crucial in ensuring a smooth-running labeling process, for shoppers and employees alike.

Labels are multifunctional. They perform numerous tasks within the self-service process, as outlined below:

Labels as an indicator

They provide customers with important information about the product, such as best-before date, price, ingredients and allergens. In addition, labels with a time-temperature indicator (TTI) show the freshness of the product throughout the entire cold chain.

Labels as a flexible part of the packaging

While packaging formats are often predefined and cannot be changed due to the automated packaging process, labels offer greater design flexibility. They add individuality to the product, plus they simultaneously fulfill other functions such as sealing and/or stabilizing the packaging.

Labels as a marketing instrument

Labels help to create a brand-specific world. They underline the high quality of a product and reinforce its uniqueness and brand image. As a marketing medium they support the corporate design but also carry product images, logos, serving suggestions or other text. Through effective label design it is possible to successfully anchor the brand name in consumers' minds and sustainably strengthen brand awareness. Additional design features such as foil embossing, labels in striking colors or a high-gloss finish all add to a product's on-shelf appeal.

Labels as a communicator

Labels also convey stored data and information over long distances. The most common forms of label-based communication are barcodes, QR codes and radio frequency (RF) or radio-frequency identification (RFID) labels. In the case of one-dimensional barcodes the information is read by a scanner and compared with data stored in a database. QR codes are two-dimensional barcodes. They contain more information, such as contact details, URLs or text. RF or RFID labels transmit encrypted data via radio waves.

Possible labeling problems

Labels can be affected by many external factors. Lubricants, dust and dirt particles, lighting conditions or ambient conditions such as temperature and humidity can all influence their functionality.

Depending on the quality of the top layer and the adhesive characteristics, some labels can withstand such external influences better than others. In the case of low-quality labels, heat can cause adhesive residues to form on the thermal strips resulting in a negative impact on hygiene. This not only increases the cleaning effort required but also causes delicate component parts such as the thermal print head to suffer wear and tear more quickly. In extreme-cases the label indeed can be significantly impeded, resulting in poor label legibility and annoying paper jams.

Furthermore, many labels are not suitable for use with food products. Glues may lose their adhesiveness when they come into contact with liquids, fats or solvents, or they can become detached when exposed to heat or cold. Other labels may fade or become illegible in sunlight.

Completely fit for purpose: Bizerba labels

All of these factors have been taken into account when developing the original Bizerba labels, which are optimally aligned with Bizerba equipment and guarantee maximum performance and functionality. The full or partial lacquer coating of the labels protects images, text or barcodes from external influences such as liquids, fats, solvents, UV light, temperature fluctuations and/or humidity.

The quality difference already becomes clear in the manufacturing process:

- The special production methods used for the roll core prevent potential damage to the printer caused by blockages: the outer-core foil coating and special adhesive ensure residue-free release of the supporting belt.
- The optimized paper coating ensures that all work steps are performed without any problems. The result: numbers, characters and barcodes are printed cleanly and clearly for excellent scannability.
- Thanks to the self-cleaning effect of the thermal paper Bizerba uses, the printer strip does not become contaminated or damaged.
- Thanks to the special printing inks and finishes, Bizerba L&C's thermal paper minimizes chemical abrasion and extends the useful life of the thermal strip.
- The thermal paper is ISEGA-certified under the provisions of the German Foodstuffs and Commodities Act.

Usage of the MC 500 exclusively in combination with technically aligned Bizerba labels substantially extends the lifetime of the state-of-the-art self-service scale. There is a tangible decrease in the costs for replacement parts as well as the amount of downtime, resulting in higher productivity. Furthermore, the self-cleaning effect of the thermal paper ensures optimal legibility of barcodes, logos and all other printed information, and hence a trouble-free in-store experience for shoppers in self-service departments.

5. Implementing and positioning the MC 500 successfully

To enable retailers to introduce self-service weighing successfully, we have put together these guidelines. They take all the important factors into account.

In-store placement

The EHI Retail Institute study revealed that the placement of the scale in the self-service department plays a very important role. For successful results, the study recommends: the locations of the scales should be clearly marked and they should be positioned along the main shopping route through the store.²⁹ The optimal positioning of the scale depends on the situation in the relevant department. The size and layout of the product display area, size of the product range and routes taken by shoppers determine how many self-service scales should be placed in the fresh produce department, and where.

The distances between the merchandise on display and the self-service scales should be as short as possible. Longer distances are particularly inconvenient for older shoppers, and narrow aisles are a considerable challenge for wheelchair users, elderly people with walking frames or parents with children in pushchairs. Thanks to its small footprint and neutral design, the MC 500 enables retailers to improve the spaciousness, clarity and strategic layout in their fresh food sales areas, creating an ideal scenario which contributes to a positive shopping experience for customers.

Employee integration and customer support

In addition to optimally positioning the self-service scales in the fresh food departments, another success factor when introducing self-service concepts is to involve and gain the support of employees in the early stages of the process. Retailers should point out the benefits of self-service weighing to

their employees in order to avoid any uncertainty or lack of acceptance from the outset. A few customer groups may also need to be actively encouraged to use self-service weighing. Retailers tend to encounter the biggest lack of acceptance or greatest resistance among older shoppers. They are often less confident with new technology and may be reluctant to use the self-service scales, especially at first, which makes it even more important that store employees are on hand to assist shoppers with operating the scales and selecting products when the new retail concept is introduced. Taking these points into consideration will ensure that the self-service weighing concept will be accepted and supported by employees and customers alike, resulting in a positive fresh produce shopping experience.

6. Summary

The grocery retail sector must respond to changing customer requirements. Consumers are increasingly looking for an autonomous, flexible, environmentally friendly and transparent shopping experience. Based on evaluation of the alternatives, self-service concepts offer retailers the best way to meet this need because this contemporary retail concept offers their customers the freedom to choose the fresh products that they require, including the desired quality and quantity of each product, and to weigh them autonomously using the self-service scales. Meanwhile, retailers benefit from lower labor and training costs, shorter queues, improved inventory management and greater customer satisfaction.

With the MC 500, Bizerba offers the optimal solution for introducing the self-service weighing concept in fresh produce departments as successfully as possible. Thanks to its small footprint and appealing stand-alone design, this self-service scale can be integrated into modern retail store concepts without a problem. The stand enables the scale to be positioned flexibly and freely, directly next to the products. And with the additional storage space, user-friendly 15.6-inch color touch display and the powerful CPU plus reliable printer, it fully meets the day-to-day demands of retailers, employees and shoppers. This is supported by the weighing pans and trays that have been specially designed for loose or elongated items. Along with the need-based software solutions, they make it easy for shoppers to use the scales and enable employees to provide assistance efficiently. Furthermore, the MC 500 supports seamless integration of third-party software such as ERP systems. The wide range of labels and cleaning products as well as professional services complete Bizerba's industry-specific offering.

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