

# ZBD EPAPER FOR RETAIL: A NEW SHELF-EDGE CONVENTION

Consumers are accustomed to seeing paper labels displaying pricing and product information at the shelf edge. But do they provide the information needed to aid in the buying decision?

How do prices compare to the supermarket down the road? And how often do damaged paper tags or missing labels lose a sale? As consumers are watching what they spend and watching what they eat, the information displayed at the shelf edge is becoming increasingly important for customer and retailer alike.

This year has seen fervent promotional activity from retailers in response to the economic downturn, with the 'Big Four' supermarkets announcing price cuts on almost 30,000 products. A price change for a single product requires a member of staff to print off a new label, and then physically take it to the product in store to change the price. That's just one product; one store. Multiply that by thousands of products, across several stores and that's a significant drain on resource.

The introduction of the last generation of electronic shelf labels (ESL) in the 1980s partially solved this problem, showing static information and resulting in measurable labour and material savings. But in order to eliminate paper completely, and provide unrestricted control of what information and messages are presented to customers, then electronic paper displays such as ZBD's epops (electronic point of purchase), are the next generation of ESL.

ZBD's epops replace paper and segment displays with fully graphical, high-resolution displays, capable of showing logos, images, nutritional information, pricing and competitor pricing. Displays mimic the appearance of ink on paper, removing all limits to screen content and are updatable at rates of thousands per hour. ZBD's epaper displays enable the retailer to deliver any content to the point of purchase, any time and combine the benefits of paper with the dynamism of displays.

Initially, the primary motive for implementing ESL was labour savings, but the focus has moved to more scientific and responsive pricing. Promotions can



ZBD's epops displaying competitor pricing; planogram; and 'health wheel' (front to back)

take weeks, months even, to plan. And if they aren't working, the messaging is rarely changed – or if it is, days can be lost in logistics planning – resulting in lost opportunity. Epaper helps make promotions dynamic, flexible and more impactful – towards 'real-time promotions'.

And the ability to show targeted consumer product information is growing in importance, with 'health wheels', key features and competitor pricing on screen – all right up-to-date for today's 'digital consumer' with ZBD's epaper for retail.

The business case for ESL is now much clearer, with opportunities for sales uplift, protecting margin, labour savings and more. It's not just labour and material savings, but other benefits including merchandising compliance and legal compliance between pricing shown at shelf edge and at the point of sale. And then there's pricing responsiveness. The 2008/2010 VAT rate changes can be implemented from head

office in seconds. But ZBD's epaper can help retailers become much more radical: the dynamic retailer can change category prices or pricebooks in a moment.

And display information isn't just customer-facing; epaper displays can be set up to show instructions for staff including planograms, merchandising and replenishment instructions and stock availability.

Cost has historically been the barrier to widespread ESL adoption, but because ZBD uses its own R&D resources and uses standard manufacturing processes, it has forced pricing down, so much so, that the Return on Investment (ROI) can be as little as 6 months.

ZBD is using its comprehensive ROI model to work closely with leading retailers in the UK, Europe and the USA to quantify the unique potential benefits that ZBD's epaper for retail can deliver. It's no longer a case of if we will see global mass adoption of ESL; but when.