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Office Depot Leverages Zebra Workcloud™ Software and Mobile Computers to Improve On-Time Task Completion Rate by 42%

Founded in 1986, Office Depot is a U.S. based provider of core office supplies, technology and business services. Under the Office Depot and OfficeMax brands, the company operates about 1,000 retail stores and its website OfficeDepot.com. Office Depot focuses its offerings on Small Businesses, Education and Home Office.

As with most retailers, change is a constant for Office Depot, especially when adapting to shifting macroeconomic environments. "Our customer expectations continuously evolve," explains Jonas Stillman, Senior Director of Omnichannel Operations at Office Depot. "Over the last five to ten years, we've seen changing buying dynamics, including a shift to omnichannel behavior which is hallmarked by customers buying online and picking up in store, same day delivery and the like."

In parallel to evolving customer needs, employee needs shifted as well. Frontline associates required greater insight and control over their schedules, and managers needed the tools to match labor to customer demand while ensuring associates could attain an optimal work-life balance.

"We are there to support our frontline associates and make sure that they can be nimble, efficient, and have all the tools readily available to them to help achieve their goals," explains Alexandra Powers, Senior Manager of Communications Culture and Associate Management at Office Depot.

True to its origins of putting customers first, Office Depot decided to expand the integration of Zebra hardware and software into its architecture to ensure it could continue to offer unparalleled levels of service.

SUMMARY

Office DEPOT. OfficeMax®

Customer
Office Depot

Industry
Office solutions and retail

Challenge
To keep up with shifting/growing buyer demands that called for more on-demand provision, Office Depot turned to Zebra to provide a hardware/software combination solution to help make work, and life, better for everyone

Benefits/Outcomes
- 90% task completion rate
- On-time task completion rate increase of 42%
- 6% annual payroll savings
- 95% reduction in unwanted overtime costs
- Reduced schedule creation time from 3-4 hours down to 30 minutes

Solution
- Zebra Workcloud Workforce Optimization: Scheduling and Task Management
- Zebra TC5X Mobile Computers

Evolving Customer Needs, Evolving Technology Needs

Office Depot identified the need to improve frontline efficiency. As its operations grew and scaled, so did the workload – and the demand for efficient ways to handle that workload. However, legacy setups and uninterrupted service delivery meant it was challenging to set aside time to streamline operations. It needed a solution it could implement quickly and easily.

"Store Managers were being slowed down by legacy processes and non-value added tasks that were almost always bottlenecking other work, simply because our previous task management system was cumbersome," explains Powers. "At the corporate level, work and task allocation literally involved digging into an Excel sheet that housed tasks, and in some instances required significant manual effort including directly emailing frontline managers to complete tasks."

"Furthermore, we wanted to make admin for our employees less of a pain," continues Powers. "We wanted to make employees' lives easier. Really, we needed a self-serve solution where associates could check schedules, submit time off requests and just make the changes they needed to. So, we needed physical devices that would harmonize effortlessly with the software we rolled out back in 2015." In response, Office Depot wanted a solution that seamlessly blended best-in-class hardware and software to ensure the retailer could do more of what it does, faster and better, with customers at the center of it all.

"At Office Depot we continue to leverage technology in our stores to drive execution," explains Stillman. "What we've been really focused on over the last several years is integrating solutions like Zebra's Workcloud software and handheld devices we have in our retail environment."

Specifically, Office Depot utilizes a fleet of Zebra mobile devices that are used extensively in all retail locations and warehouses. Deployment of the devices started in 2019, and they are now the cornerstone of Office Depot's operations. They're used for everything from logistics to pricing and customer service to order picking at the tail end of omnichannel order funnels (when buyers order online and want to pick up in store, for example).

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>
> **Alexandra Powers**
> Senior Manager, Communications, Culture & Engagement at Office Depot

> "Leveraging Zebra's Workcloud software and their hardware solutions together, and the integration of both programs working in unison for us to be able to solve these problems has been extremely helpful. Zebra's Modern Store framework is really exciting for retailers like us, where we're looking at two to three years down the road and trying to find solutions that manage the business end to end."

Jonas Stillman
Senior Director,
Omnichannel Operations
at Office Depot

A Seamless Blend of Technologies for a Seamless Experience

The Workcloud Workforce Optimization software solution rolled out for Office Depot has been a game changer for the retailer, whose objective is to bring to life an omnichannel experience like no other. The Zebra mobile devices were infused with Zebra's Workcloud software which offers Office Depot a simple, streamlined way to plan and manage work. Workcloud Workforce Optimization software enabled Office Depot to improve operational efficiency so the team can spend more time serving customers.

With Zebra Workcloud, what Office Depot has really achieved is a holistic, all-encompassing software and hardware solution that streamlines work, helps management delineate and divide tasks and gives associates a much clearer overview of the most important tasks. With the purpose-built Workcloud Task Management solution, associates know what's next on the agenda for them.

And the proof is in the progress. "We're proud to have achieved a 90% task execution rate in 2022, which is unheard of," says Powers. "In addition, thanks to the upgrades, we've become a lot more efficient by getting our on-time completion rate up by 42%."

Workcloud Scheduling also bolstered store managers' capacity to simplify and improve scheduling to make sure customers could meet with the right associates with the right skills at the right time. All while staying better aligned with store labor budgets. Benefits included a 95% reduction in unwanted overtime costs, a reduced schedule creation time from 3-4 hours down to 30 minutes and a 6% annual payroll saving.

The Modern Store Framework is Zebra's offering for optimizing the output and workflows of stores with complex operational models. It enables retailers to create a customer-focused and efficient operation based on the three outcomes that define modern retail — engaged associates, optimized inventory and an elevated customer experience.

To learn more visit **www.zebra.com**

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