

# ShelfLink – A revolutionary innovation with a **unique value proposition** for retailers

*Vincent Lanz, Managing Director and co-founder of Neo Retail Solutions, answers questions around the launch of ShelfLink – a revolutionary innovation designed for retail.*

## Q. What is ShelfLink™?

ShelfLink™ is THE ultimate Task Manager for retail.

## Q. Overall, what does ShelfLink™ do?

It takes the guessing out of all aspects of store management.

## Overview: ShelfLink™ provides:

- Visibility into all departments
- Performance management workflows
- Instant availability of information
- Staff, stock, equipment, and store maintenance visibility real-time.

## Q. In-Store – what does it do?

**Store:** It facilitates real-time monitoring and management of store activities and tasks from anywhere and at any time.

**Tasks:** As most duties are repetitive, they are easily assigned to staff through smart devices and progress is monitored with screen shots which highlight areas of concern, noting what the problem is and which employee is responsible.

## Q. How does ShelfLink™ maximise my investment/cost of Labour?

As a retailer you are familiar with the usual scene of staff performing tasks by habit or with supervisory oversight with no monitoring of the

tasks or measurement of individual performance.

As you know your staff constitute your next highest cost centre after rent and utilities. You know it is simply too expensive to keep unproductive people around, or to throw more people at the problem.

The question is – what can you do about this? The answer is ShelfLink™.

This is how ShelfLink™ maximises productivity:

**Staff:** ShelfLink™ tracks staff performance in real-time. The mobile app indicates the completion status of staff priority tasks on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis.

**Accountability:** Assigned tasks must be accepted by the relevant staff member, executed, and reported on, when completed. If the process is taking too long or there are inconsistencies, the results are escalated to supervisors.

**Hiring:** It eliminates the leap of faith in hiring. You can test applicants in a live situation and adjudicate their performance based on the score they achieve.

**Promoting:** Tasks completed contribute to the individual performance assessment, assisting you to choose the best candidate for promotion.

## Q. What can it do for my management of stock.

**Gap Analysis:** You will know all about this and the often laborious task of taking a device around a store, scanning barcodes and discovering the bad news that your stock levels are perilously low in your best-selling ranges and/or you are over-stocked in slow moving goods.

Research shows that there is typically a wide gap between the stock on the shelf and what the ERP system indicates. NEO Retail's research across a variety of retail stores showed that on average there was only a 22% correlation between fast moving stock-on-shelf versus reports on the ERP database.

You know what that means! Your ordering is either too high - tying up valuable cash - or too low - which results in significant stock outs and lost sales.

Typically Stores receiving stock every three days, increase their stock holding to over twenty days in a desperate attempt to remain stocked with an array of SKUs. This devours cashflow – a situation that few companies can justify and what is worse, it doesn't stop stock-outs.

ShelfLink™ tracks stock-in at receiving and stock-out at the POS, in real-time. Furthermore, it generates frequent shelf stock counts driving up the ERP system stock accuracy percentages into the upper 90's.

Continued from page 14

That means vastly fewer over and under ordering occurs, saving cash and increasing sales. Planograms are also regularly validated and can be changed across the market in a matter of hours. These issues become a thing of the past with ShelfLink™

#### ShelfLink™ enables instant stock checks.

- It monitors stock from the receiving bay through to the point of sale (POS)
- It provides cyclical stock counts that improve accuracy - translates into never losing a sales opportunity
- It prevents stock outages and overstocking
- It enables speedy reaction to stock imbalances

#### Q. How do I monitor and manage equipment?

Just as having the wrong stock costs you money, so too does having fridges that don't stay within mandated tolerance ranges. Service providers not attending to issues is also costly and frustrating. In most cases issues are not visible to your store management and as such remain unattended.

ShelfLink™ is the answer:

- ShelfLink™ provides a real-time view of the operational state of all the equipment on a single platform
- It advises when service companies attend to issues and highlights if they are not dealing with the problem – this becomes highly visible
- It prevents equipment breakdowns
- It highlights what the issue is, which staff member must see to it and it then reports, in real-time, on the status of repairs/ replacement etc. staff actions/ follow-up or lack of same.

#### Q. Routine Health and Safety Store Maintenance is a real headache – what can I do to automate processes?

Health, safety, and general good store management processes need to be executed routinely and accurately. You will relate to the fact that there are always more important issues to attend to leaving these tasks neglected or rushed through just before inspectors conduct a site visit.

You end up with wasted manpower and more importantly the ability to establish good store working systems, is negated. This last lies at the heart of efficient store systems.

ShelfLink™ ensures that all those tasks are assigned to specific staff members for completion, thus providing accountability and ensuring repeat tasks are scheduled and reported on.

#### Q. Covid has brought new pressures, regulations, and restrictions – how can ShelfLink™ help me to deal with the new normal?

The Covid pandemic has brought reduced shopper spending and more. As a retailer you are urgently seeking to enhance operational efficiencies, reduce employee contact with shoppers, and shorten queues, but you are doing it by relying on your ERP systems to track store buying, selling and human resources (HR). The problem with this is that they do not offer a real-time view of the store or staff tracking.

Typically, ERP systems report 'statement of fact' that is after the work shift or day is complete. An effective analogy is to compare the store to steering a car – by looking out of the rear window.

The result is low accuracy and a high dependence on a very few conscientious employees to keep the car on the road.

#### Q. What is the difference between ShelfLink™ and an ERP system

ShelfLink™ not only offers a windshield, real-time view of the entire store environment, including staff, stock, equipment, maintenance etc., but ascertains exactly what each member of staff is doing, plus what they should be doing, at any given time.

#### Q. Can it help me to monitor my competition?

ShelfLink™ provides store comparisons in your operational sector and yields information on how you stack up against competitors.

#### About Neo Retail Solutions

NEO Retail Solutions is poised to take advantage of Retail Automation advances as the company introduces a range of solutions into the Retail Market, focused on maximizing convenience and securing stock, while increasing range and sales of High Value Products.

The company is also expanding into self-service and mobi vending, offering brands far greater insights via analytics and value-added services (VAS).

Our founders have more than 25 years of experience conceptualising, designing, building, selling and supporting automated retail technology solutions in South Africa and overseas markets such as Germany, Italy, New Zealand, and South Korea.

For more information, visit [www.neo-rs.com](http://www.neo-rs.com)