



WERMA® Success Story

Supermarket shopping made faster and less stressful with AndonSPEED from WERMA

The innovative wireless based call-for-action system speeds up the check-out process

Shopping nowadays is more than just an obligatory duty to buy essentials; it has also become for many people a social event. The "shopping experience" is a necessary task yet at the same time many people, especially those in full-time working, find they have less and less time available to buy the essentials.

Supermarket shopping is an event in itself where for most people once the trolley has been filled as little time as possible should be spent wasting time in the queue for the check-out. For this reason more and more supermarkets are deploying call systems at the check-out to make this part of the process quick, and efficient.

LECLERC – SUPERMARKET OF THE FUTURE

The French supermarket chain has more than 560 outlets in France and has some giant retail areas with their so-called "hypermarkets". One outlet in Northern France in Loison-sous-Lens has more than 110 staff working in an area of 6000 sqm with the objective of providing their customers with the most pleasant purchasing experience possible. This branch is a flagship in the company's chain and combines optimized product presentation and display and a wide range of items in a modern shopping atmosphere using the latest technology to assist shopping.

A particular goal was set to make the whole check-out and payment process as efficient as possible for the consumer, avoiding long waiting times. "We know how long queues are irritating for our customers and so, for example, en-route to checkout they should be able to see where it is best to go and stand in line" says Bruno Leleu Facilities Manager at Leclerc. Management also wanted to display which check outs are open in order to improve efficiency. "We wanted to have complete transparency of all 21 check-outs all of the time! We also wanted to give each cashier the ability to call for assistance at the press of a button without leaving the work station and thereby causing yet more delays", continues Leleu.



Leclerc is a French supermarket chain and with more than 560 outlets is a top seller in France. The Loison-sous-Lens branch has installed AndonSPEED from WERMA.

COMPLETE TRANSPARENCY WITH ANDONSPEED

Whilst looking for a suitable system to use Leleu found the beacon, sounder and systems manufacturer WERMA. Here he discovered their Andon light systems. The innovative wireless

Image: All 21 check-outs have been fitted the call-for-action system from WERMA including three tier colour andon lights so that everyone can immediately see whether a check-out is open.

LECLERC SUPERMARKET

Leclerc is a French supermarket chain with its head office in Ivry-sur-Seine and is particularly well known for its superstore retail outlets known as "Hypermarkets". Leclerc has more than 560 branches in France and a further 40 in neighbouring European countries. Alongside a comprehensive range of food stuffs the chain also sells clothing, toys, household goods and much, much more. The shops are most commonly found on urban retail parks which offer large free of charge parking and usually a petrol station as well. The Loison-sous-Lens branch in Northern France has more than 110 staff and is considered to be a flagship outlet within the Leclerc Group.



andon light system shows at the press of a button which illuminates a bright and clearly visible signal light which check-out is available or requires assistance.

The word "andon" comes from the Japanese language and means "warning lamp" which may be used to indicate a change on status which requires immediate attention to rectify. WERMA's call-for-action system works on this principal. The illuminated light shows the actual status and may indicate for example to a supervisor that assistance is required. Up to eight different status conditions can be activated by using a four button switch box packed with smart electronics.

ANDONSPEED HIT THE MARK IMMEDIATELY

The main reason leading to the decision by Leclerc to use the WERMA system was the simple and easy to retrofit features. "For us it was especially important to choose a solution which we could install quickly and then expand at any time easily" says Leleu. In addition Leclerc was especially impressed by the remote wireless monitoring feature.



The software package shows the status of all 21 check-outs at a glance.

We came across this system and were immediately very impressed" continues Leleu. "David Defever came and demonstrated the system to us on site and we decided immediately that we wanted to test the system".

After the on-site demonstration installation was carried out: "We could hardly believe how quickly the system was installed and how the software is so easy and simple to use" recalls Leleu, "and we were able to produce initial reports on day one".

STATUS REPORTING AT THE TOUCH OF A BUTTON

Each check-out is fitted with an Andon SmartBOX which the member of staff activates by pressing the appropriate button to indicate that the check-out is open or closed or that there is a particular problem that needs to be resolved. The status is indicated by the clearly visible appropriate signal light color. The member of staff does not need to go off and look for someone to help, queues and waiting times become a thing of the past and the whole process becomes more lean and efficient.

Labels can be fixed to the buttons on the switch box to indicate clearly the function required. A final finishing touch is the provision with the kit of a standard plug in power supply unit so no additional cabling and wiring is required ensuring the whole system can be installed quickly and easily.

COMMON TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM INDICATES STATUS

Leclerc use a three colour traffic light system. If a check-out is closed the red light is illuminated. As soon as a check-out is opened the member of staff switches the light from red to green, the light being clearly visible by customers and management alike. The cashier has two further options – with the amber light assistance can be called for without leaving the workstation. Red on the other hand indicates a higher state of urgency, and danger. "The system is really very simple and self-explanatory because of the standard colours used" comments Leleu.

The KombiSIGN 72 modular andon lights used are extremely bright and give excellent all-round visibility with n dead spots. Easy to assemble and install with long-life LEDs the andon lights are also very maintenance friendly having smooth, easy to clean surfaces.

INTELLIGENT REPORTS

The software delivered with the system is very simple to install and collects all of the status light change data which can then be used to produce reports and analyses. The impartial and accurate data leads to perfect transparency of the process. "It will be possible to implement decisions based on accurate figures. Pinch-points can be identified, and processes improved with durable measures and significant reductions in waiting time can be achieved" comments Winfried Huber Sales Director at WERMA Signaltechnik.

Data is displayed on simple and comprehensive visuals revealing the actual behavior of the process in unequivocal terms. The improved



The cashier can change the lights or call for help using the Andon SmartBOX without leaving the workstation.

transparency of the operation can lead to continuous improvements in down-time and waiting times and lead to untapped potential being revealed and put to good use.

Leclerc in Loison-sous-Lens have installed the software on two laptops; one is located on the information desk at the entrance to the supermarket and the other in the main operations office of the General Manager. Members of staff can therefore see at the glance the status of all 21 check-outs and see immediately if any of them require assistance or support.

"Thanks to the simple and efficient system we have been able to optimize our flow of customers and we are working much more effectively and efficiently" beams Leleu, "reaction times have reduced considerably and we have virtually halted any stoppages. Our customers notice this and are very happy not to have to wait long times at the check-outs."

"We could hardly believe how quickly the system was installed and how the software is so easy and simple to use."
