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Delivering retail innovation

Portuguese media distributor VASP boosts retail services with tablet-based point-of-sale devices powered by Intel® Atom™ processors

![vasp]

VASP is a media distributor in Portugal with over 9,500 retail sales stores in its network. Most of these are small and medium businesses (SMBs) and sole traders that rely on VASP for technology to help them grow their businesses. Initially a logistics-only media delivery business, VASP has diversified, becoming a comprehensive IT provider and parcel courier. Currently responsible for the point-of-sale (POS) devices and IT support for approximately 1,300 retailers, VASP recently invested in tablet-based POS systems, powered by Intel® Atom™ processors, to complement its traditional POS portals.

Challenges

- **Contracting industry.** Print media is flagging, so media distributor VASP needed to expand its business.
- **Helping customers.** VASP wanted to help its customers grow their businesses by enabling them to offer new services via technology.
- **Small retail.** Many retailers are roadside stands and tiny kiosks, so using traditional stationary POS solutions can be difficult in terms of space and investment.

Solutions

- **Retail management.** VASP supplies POS systems to 1,300 retailers across Portugal, from the desktop-based HP RP7 Retail System* powered by Intel® Core™ processors to the HP ElitePad Mobile* with Intel Atom processors.
- **Innovative payment.** VASP offers its POS retail solutions on a flexible rental basis so customers can try the technology for varying time periods and pay weekly, making this useful technology affordable.

Technology results

- **Compatible technology.** VASP is delivering reliable technology that works with Microsoft Windows* 8 on an intuitive touchscreen interface.
- **Enhanced security.** Intel's built-in security helps give VASP reliable data protection technology. Specifically, Intel® Advanced Encryption Standards New Instructions (Intel® AES-NI) accelerates encryption and decryption speeds.[1, 2]
- **Long life.** These tablets have long battery life thanks to the low power consumption of Intel Atom processors, making them ideal for busy shopkeepers.

Business value

- **Going mobile.** VASP is building the reputation of tablets in the retail space, offering mobile POS solutions to enable efficient retail management for businesses of all sizes.
- **Efficient business.** Supplying automated Intel® technology-based retail technology to smaller businesses helps VASP customers to streamline their work, making time for more business-critical tasks.
- **Successful diversity.** Thanks to this project, the IT department has more than doubled and, according to VASP's internal analysis, the project has contributed significantly to revenues.

> "Intel® Atom™ processors have revolutionized our retail IT offering. Now, we can roll out tablet solutions with great Microsoft Windows* compatibility, superior processing capabilities and, perhaps most importantly, low power consumption, which translates into long battery life."
>
> *Pedro Soares de Pinho,*
> *Chief Information Officer and*
> *IT Manager, VASP*

Media network

VASP is one of the biggest press distribution companies in Portugal. The media industry is decreasing worldwide, especially print publications, and Portugal is no exception. VASP caters to around 9,500 retail shops, 2,000 of which are gas stations and press outlet chains in big supermarkets. These retailers sell VASP newspapers and magazines but, with dropping sales, many were worried about finances and looking for ways to innovate their businesses.

"Maintaining a solid network of retail stores is crucial, not only to us, but also to the greater economy," said Soares de Pinho, chief information officer at VASP. "Most of these shops are small family businesses that are the backbone of our nation. We wanted to help bolster these local retailers by providing new products and services that could help them to grow their income. In 2012, we began distributing books. Now we have a fully-fledged parcel delivery service that has around 600 pick-up points throughout Portugal called Kios Send and Return*. Prior to that, we had already diversified into IT services."

VASP supports retail technology with Intel® technology-based POS solutions, from traditional PCs to tablet devices

New offerings

In 2009, the VASP IT department took care of 250 users. Now it supports more than 2,000 users across Portugal and is still growing due to high demand. From offering traditional POS portals to its retailers, it upgraded to Intel technology-based POS devices two years ago and has been extending its offerings to tablet-based POS systems powered by Intel Atom processors for the last six months, in a project named Kios Kube*.

"It takes drive to create change, as well as good communication and proper rewards for early adopters, but we've had excellent experiences with our customers because they see the benefits in implementing new technologies," said Soares de Pinho. "We already use Intel technology in our data center and internal laptops and workstations, so we prefer new projects to be supported by Intel technology as well. In setting up this new project, it was crucial for us to be able to trust the technology, so we invested in the HP ElitePad Mobile POS Solution powered by Intel Atom processors. Our relationships with HP, Softvoice, and Sage meant that we could build a comprehensive project to fit our needs."

Currently, VASP offers traditional PC-based POS devices including the HP RP7 Retail System, powered by Intel Core processors, as well as the new tablet devices. In most cases, tablets complement current POS usage for retailers that are more advanced, so VASP is confident others will follow suit. By investing in mobile-based Intel® solutions, VASP can confidently scale its business growth and add value to many retail customers. Being able to offer mobile solutions is a solid base on which VASP can build future services, since it is such a flexible, business-ready form factor.

Getting mobile

VASP's main aim in branching out to deliver IT solutions was to provide IT awareness and professional, efficient retail management to shops across Portugal and establish a framework for developing other services and solutions. Moving to a mobile POS solution was the first step. It has radically changed the way VASP does business, opening up a new customer segment and positively impacting profitability.

Both Softvoice and HP worked with VASP to find the perfect retail solution and, with Sage* Retail Software, VASP has a solution that allows retailers to easily download VASP's invoices and delivery sheets to automate transactions and create extra time for more important tasks. The Intel Atom processor's low power consumption means these devices can run for a long time. Other tablet features specific to Intel technology-based tablets add security and efficiency. For instance, Secure Boot allows users to restart the device more safely, and Intel AES-NI offers faster data encryption.

Currently, 1,300 clients are using a POS solution from VASP, with more testing these devices to see how they fit into daily work. VASP offers a rental service with a financial model with a very low cost for up to three years, charged on top of the weekly invoice the retailer regularly pays, for example for the delivery of goods. This makes it a flexible and affordable option for many smaller businesses.

Future growth

Offering small retailers a mobile POS solution with the goal of sustaining growth has benefitted VASP in a number of ways. The business has succeeded in creating a framework to launch new products and services across its retail

customers. The increased activity has meant that the IT department has grown significantly. "The project is a great success," said Soares de Pinho. "Over 1,300 shops are now connected to us, which is more than 17 percent of our customer base. It is fantastic that this many retailers have invested in our Intel technology-based solution over such a short space of time, and we hope to increase this significantly moving forward."

Indeed, VASP continues to grow thanks to its open-minded approach to business siloes and technology. Thanks to the success of this first IT project, VASP is the only service provider of Sage Retail Solutions to cover the whole country and is now supporting other lines of retail shops outside its own network.

"We are very proud of our growing and diverse range of services, including Kios Send and Return," said Soares de Pinho. "The Kios services are definite proof that this solution empowered VASP to achieve a new era in its relationship with customers and the retail market segment. However, we are not going to stop here. We have more services being prepared to reach the marketplace early next year and are working on several other new projects."

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