

Customer Success Story | Product: **SolveDirect BRIDGE**

Efficient Store Support and Service  
Provider Management



For over 10 years, the grocery store group SPAR, has outsourced IT services for incident management of their technical equipment for POS (Point-of-Sale) printers, POS cash registers, electronic scales, telephony equipment, and electronic payment systems across 1,270 stores with SolveDirect. SPAR was able to significantly increase customer satisfaction.

With a market share of **29.2 %** of the grocery industry in Austria, according to ACNielsen, SPAR is the strong number two. In fiscal year 2010, SPAR in Austria had about **38,000 employees**, reached revenues of **5.15 billion Euros**, and experienced growth of **4.5 %** which is the highest growth in market share of all food retailer in Austria. Highly efficient IT support for all stores is absolutely critical for SPAR. In order to deliver impeccable customer service, devices must be repaired quickly in the event of failure.

**Challenge:**  
Increasing Customer Satisfaction and Managing Service Providers

Customer satisfaction is the key success factor in the highly competitive food trade especially with IT outsourcing. This also implies, that POS printers, electronic scales as well as the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) equipment for store administration must work reliably and incidents must be solved quickly. The unique challenge with Spar is that different devices are supported by different service providers.

For example: If one scale malfunctions in a store, queues form quickly at the meat counter and impatient customers may abandon their shopping carts with perishable goods and perhaps even leave the store to buy their meat elsewhere. This type of incident with the meat scale results in not only the loss of revenue, but also the potential loss of a long-term customer and it creates a stressful situation for store personal. Typically the Store Manager is called, who then has to clarify which service level

Highlights | Industry: Retail

**GOALS:**

- Automation of the processes involved in incident management
- Efficient management of all service providers and device manufacturers
- Easy integration of new service partners
- Inventory – IT devices

**BENEFITS AND RESULTS:**

- Management of 1,270 grocery stores
- Inventory of 40,775 IT devices
- Processing of 71,766 help desk tickets since 2000
- Time savings over 10 years for SPAR's Store Managers: including all calls, data collection, troubleshooting, etc. is 2.5 hours per day, 7,475 days, 267 months, 22.25 years

agreements exists and with which service provider, and which technician is responsible and available. Without automation the Store Manager would need to contact the technician personally, provide the device data etc. and agree on the fastest possible repair appointment and ensure that the technician arrives.

**Solution:**  
Service Integration in the Cloud with SolveDirect

SPAR found the solution for this problem at SolveDirect, a global company that provides cloud-based solutions for smart IT service management integration. The SolveDirect Service Integration Hub is now SPAR's central hub for managing all business partners and service-related systems to ensure continuous, transparent and accelerated service processes throughout all of the SPAR stores. Service management information is automatically exchanged between SPAR's help desk and those of their IT service providers to resolve incidents rapidly.



The SolveDirect solution optimizes and automates the collaboration and interaction between the SPAR service employees and external partners, which not only reduces costs but also eliminates errors and improves the quality of support. Efficient automated transactions replace extensive manual operations at SPAR and incidents are processed and solved quickly and efficiently.

The SolveDirect solution enables SPAR to: integrate various service providers for the devices, enter support requests directly in the web interface, and then automatically route incidents to the right technician. The efficiency of end-to-end delivery processes is monitored closely using SolveDirect's reporting in order to ensure compliance with SPAR's multiple service level agreements (SLAs). SPAR coordinates the collaboration between service providers such as **Wincor Nixdorf, Telekom Austria, s&t, Mettler Toledo, Bizerba, Gunnebo**, which provide the technical support for the devices in the both the stores and offices.

*"If the credit card reader at the cash register malfunctions, it would be a critical situation, especially on a Saturday when the stores are very crowded. With SolveDirect a ticket can be created quickly and is forwarded automatically with the necessary priority to the right service provider without any additional effort of the Store Manager."*, says Roland Hahn, Head of IT-Service, SPAR St. Pölten, Austria.

## Benefits:

### Significant Time Savings and Improved Customer Service

Today nearly **1,300 SPAR stores** and offices are managed with SolveDirect. The savings are impressive. In one year, about **3,900 tickets** were processed via the SolveDirect platform to resolve technology issues. "If we calculate that a Store Manager is able to save 10 minutes on every help desk ticket because he doesn't need to call multiple times to reach the right service technician and he also doesn't need to track the repair process, we save **80 working days** a year. But this is just one example that demonstrates the savings", explains Roland Hahn.



>> *"Efficient procedures contribute a significant part to our above-average growth and are an essential part of our corporate philosophy, which always puts people first. We use the SolveDirect platform now across 1,270 stores in Austria and integrated 52 INTERSPAR markets. In the future we want to get more independent SPAR merchants on board". Roland Hahn still sees potential for further efficiency gains. "When it comes to fast resolution of service incidents to achieve outstanding customer service, SolveDirect is indispensable for SPAR"* <<

Roland Hahn,  
Head of IT-Service SPAR St. Pölten, Austria

SPAR uses the platform not only for effective service provider management, but also for internal communications between the IT Departments in Headquarters in Salzburg, Austria, and their six regional offices. Another major benefit per Roland Hahn, is SPAR's centralized device inventory of approximately **40,000 active devices** which is now actively managed in the SolveDirect database in the cloud. This way the devices and available parts can be monitored in real-time to see whether a replacement product is currently in stock or if new equipment needs to be ordered. Which devices need to be renewed at what time is pro-actively managed by SPAR via SolveDirect. This makes it possible to avoid downtime resulting from outdated IT equipment, and to monitor the quality of the equipment for planning and future technology investments. The IT Department along with management have a much better overview of the quality of the individual device groups as well as how to complete forecasts for replacements.

With the SolveDirect platform SPAR relies on a proven solution which facilitates their business growth both domestically and internationally.