

Formal Report Proposal

Background

Best Buy Mobile is a branch of Best Buy Co. It provides accessories and electronics specific to mobile and smart home living. Located at the heart of Downtown Vancouver, the mobile store at Pacific Center was one of Best Buy Co.'s first mobile stores in the country. It is a particularly busy location, in fact, it is one of the highest earning stores. Its prime real estate attracts an immense amount of foot traffic, ranging from tourists and students to Vancouver's corporate elite.

Statement of problem

Being a senior associate at this location for the past two years provides the unique opportunity to immerse oneself in every aspect of the store's running. That being said, a lot of paper is used daily on:

- Contracts: Minimum 4 pages per contract (at least 10 activations/day)
 - Results in ~ **40 pages/day**
- Pricing Grids: Outlines daily deals for 6 carriers and other promotions, printed per staff
 - Results in ~**36 pages/day**
- Receipts: Vary in length, often with extra writing for disclaimers and return policies
 - **100s are printed/day**
- Price Tags: Denote the price of each item in the store and are replaced daily
 - Results in at least **16 pages** of thick card paper being disposed/day

We all do our best to recycle as much paper as possible, but there are many occasions where they end up in the trash. It also seems that much of the information being printed, could potentially be digitalized, starting with Best Buy Mobile's price tags. These are switched out daily, and are made of a much thicker paper than the other files. They are also quite small, making it tempting to dispose of them in the trash, rather than recycling them. Not only this, but stores are required to print out pages of price tags and have employees tear/remove them by hand and physically replace them for each and every product.

Proposed Plan

Why replace paper price tags on such a frequent basis when Best Buy, a provider of digital devices and accessories, could implement a digital system? Perhaps high volume Best Buy Mobile stores could convert from paper to digital price tags. Best Buy manufactures many products, so they must also own their own factories. While other companies already provide digitalized price tags supermarkets like Superstore, if Best Buy's were to manufacture its own tags, it would be less costly.

An interconnected application could be developed so that all managers or senior associates simply have to click to update prices. The application would also have to sync all tags. This

would maintain consistency across stores, save time, and paper. We already have digital displays for ads and new products, why not miniaturize and expand this to price tags?

Scope

I will use the following questions to guide my progress:

- What would it cost to purchase digital price tags from a secondary source?
- What might it cost for Best Buy to manufacture their own price tags?
- Does a separate application need to be developed or do others exist out there that can be linked to custom price tags?
- Why hasn't this been done yet?
- What are higher ranking members of Best Buy concerned of?

Methods

Interviews will be conducted with Best Buy Mobile employees, including the manager, and potentially the District Regional manager. My goal at each level is to discover how digital price tags would effect each individual and their concerns for such an overhaul.

Qualifications

I have been a Best Buy employee for nearly five years. I have learned the ins and outs of the mobile stores, processes, and policies. As an employee working on the ground level of such a huge, digital retailer I am witness to its strengths and faults. Over the past few years, there are many deficits I have noticed, wasting paper being one of the biggest.

As a keyholder for the past four years, I have observed the store's habits. I know that closing and opening duties are often when the most paper is printed and wasted. I have also observed other member's remarks regarding the process of replacing price tags and have noted the time it wastes.

Intended reader

The intended reader is the District Regional Manager who oversees all the mobile stores in British Columbia. My manager is in close contact with him, and he has the ability to pass this report on to Best Buy Canada at the corporate level.

Best Buy is a tech giant. Implementing a digitalized price tag system seems like a natural progression. With companies like Superstore, that rival in size and manpower, it feels as though Best Buy has a responsibility to *green* as many aspects of their retail stores as possible.