Colruyt Group
Colruyt Group is a leading Belgian retail conglomerate. Based in Halle, Belgium, Colruyt Group operates more than 1,100 convenience stores and affiliated supermarkets under several different banners in Belgium, France, and Luxembourg. These include the Spar Colruyt Group supermarket chain and OKay convenience chain.

Starting Point – Save time for customers and employees

Seeking to save customers more time and enhance their shopping experience, Colruyt Group decided to develop and implement a mobile shopping app for customers with self-scanning and self-checkout capabilities.

In addition to saving customers time by letting them do more for themselves and avoid waiting in a checkout queue, the self-scanning mobile app would also free up employees who would otherwise operate traditional POS terminals.

Vision – Deploy a robust, reliable mobile shopping app to turn customers’ smart devices into enterprise-grade self-scanning machines

Colruyt Group had never before provided customers a self-scanning app in any of its retail brands. Since Spar Colruyt Group stores are independently owned, Colruyt realized that franchisees did not have the resources to invest in hardware or complex technology solutions, but they certainly want to be part of new innovations in retail to surprise and delight customers. For OKay and OKay Compact stores, the idea of self-scanning to save time perfectly fits with their focus on fast and efficient shopping.

For these reasons, Colruyt Group decided to develop and deploy a mobile shopping app that customers could download on their own smartphones directly. Individual Spar Colruyt Group and OKay stores would not have to acquire new hardware or engage in app development to support the process. In order to achieve this goal, Colruyt Group would need to work with a technology platform that operates simply and requires no networking or software integration at the store level.

In summer 2018 Colruyt Group launched a pilot project deploying its line-free mobile Scan.Pay.Go self-checkout app developed in collaboration with FutureProof Retail at four Spar Colruyt Group stores and four OKay stores located in Belgium. Colruyt Group made the app available for free download on iOS and Android devices. The app enables customers using it for the first time to enter information as if they were enrolling in the Colruyt Group Xtra loyalty rewards program. Whenever they shop, the app automatically recognizes them every time they launch it.
FutureProof Retail’s app enables customers to scan the barcodes of items as they place them into both a virtual and physical shopping cart, and view a running tally of their purchases on the display of their smartphone while shopping. When a customer is finished shopping and ready to pay for the items in their cart, they tap a button on the display screen that enables them to launch a debit card-based payment app of their choice.

After making their payment, customers are automatically returned to FutureProof Retail’s app. Digital receipts of all purchases are stored in the app for easy customer access and review.

Solution – Fast, accurate scanning in all conditions

Initially, Colruyt Group tested FutureProof Retail’s mobile shopping app with an integrated open source barcode scanning code. While general customer reaction to the app was positive, Colruyt Group was confronted by a number of serious issues related to scanning performance that made open source code unsuitable for use in their app.

“We were concerned the open source scanner wouldn’t satisfy our needs,” said Kristof Schraepen, Digital Transformation Manager, Colruyt Group. “In a realistic setting, such as a store, lighting can be an issue. Our customers are not used to scanning product barcodes themselves, so we wanted to make sure we had the best barcode reader available in our app.”

Colruyt Group had separately met with Scandit at an industry technology event and decided to test the effectiveness of the proprietary Scandit Barcode Scanner SDK in the FutureProof self-scanning app.

Scandit Barcode Scanner SDK works out of the box. We have performed almost no configuration to its default settings.

Kristof Schraepen
Digital Transformation Manager, Colruyt Group

Results – Optimal scan performance with minimal development

Since FutureProof Retail integrated Scandit’s Barcode Scanner SDK into its mobile self-scanning app, Colruyt Group has been highly impressed with its barcode scanning performance and ease of use.

“Scandit Barcode Scanner SDK works out of the box,” commented Schraepen. “We have performed almost no configuration to its default settings.”

In addition, customers have been satisfied with Scandit Barcode Scanner SDK’s barcode scanning performance and have reported virtually no complaints or issues. Since Scandit Barcode Scanner SDK is compatible with a wide range of iOS and Android devices, including older models with lower-resolution commodity cameras, there have been few app adoption issues for Colruyt Group’s diverse customer base.

For store associates, reliable customer self-checkout with a shopping app has made it possible for them to spend more time on other important tasks, such as ensuring store organization and making certain that products are attractively displayed and facing forward.

“Employees can optimize store presentation,” said Schraepen. “Most stores perform these tasks when there is time left over, but they are crucial to ensure an enjoyable and efficient shopping experience.”

Although Colruyt Group expected mostly customers with smaller market baskets to take advantage of the mobile shopping app, the retailer has found that the average basket size when shopping with the app is comparable to the basket size in a traditional purchase. This means that the app is being used across the entire customer base according to individual shopper preference and not size of the transaction.

“We are currently evaluating the costs and results of the self-scanning pilot,” concluded Schraepen. “But we're not the only ones. In the end, it'll be our customers deciding which solution they prefer for their next visit.”

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About Scandit

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Scandit’s mobile data capture platform is built on proprietary computer vision, augmented reality, and machine learning technologies. Companies in industries such as retail, transportation and logistics, manufacturing, and healthcare can use Scandit’s technology to create and power mobile apps for crucial enterprise workflows like mobile point of sale, mobile shopping, self-checkout, inventory management, and proof of delivery.

Many of the world's most innovative and successful companies are benefiting from Scandit's enterprise-grade mobile data capture platform, including Sephora, Louis Vuitton, DHL, Auchan and LaPoste.

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