

WEIGHING INSTRUMENTS IN THE RETAIL SECTOR

Retail stores such as grocery stores, post offices and butcheries are constantly weighing products to establish the right price for the product. Fair trade wouldn't be possible without reliable weighing instruments in these shops. Not only for the products that are weighed at the spot such as meat or vegetables, but also for the countless products that are prepacked and sold based on weight. Weighing instrument are necessary to protect consumer rights and ensure retailers get the right price for their products.



EXAMPLES OF WEIGHING INSTRUMENTS USED IN THE RETAIL SECTOR

The most known case of a retail scales is probably the non-automatic scale that is used in shops where vegetables, fruits or any other food product is sold based on weight. The general purpose of the weighing instrument remained the same over the last centuries; having a reliable indication of the weight of a product to ensure the right price. These scales need to be robust to deal with the operational conditions in the retail shops and remain accurate.

However, weighing instruments in the retail sector evolved and are used in different occasions now than centuries ago. An obvious example is the increase in online shops active in retail. Reliable weighing instruments are just as important for the weighed products sold in these shops.

Additionally, a large share of the products bought are priced based on weight, but they are not weighed at the scale at the shop. Pre-packages such as canned vegetables, packages of pasta or chocolate bars are all weighed at a different location than where it is sold. Where these products are weighed there is the need for weighing instruments that can weigh fast and accurately with a minimum requirement for human intervention. Modern automatic weighing instruments such as price-labelling instruments make this possible.

Moreover, weighing instruments are more and more part of the total supply chain system of retail stores. The weight of products sold can be communicated with the central order management system providing the opportunity to get an overview of the available stock within one click.



FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE RETAIL SECTOR

There is a constant stream of new trends and ideas to change the customers experience in retail stores. Many of them come with new challenges and opportunities for weighing instruments. One example is the concept to remove all check outs from supermarkets. Customers pay for each product they purchase the moment they take it from the shelves including products that are weighed. To allow this development technical innovations need to be implemented including possible adjustments to weighing instruments to deal with the payments.

Another new trend is having shops that don't sell packed products for environmental reasons. All customers need to bring their own container that is weighed before and after it is filled. This increases the number of weighing in a shop significantly bringing new challenges and opportunities for weighing instruments.

Finally, digital innovations will bring endless possibilities to enhance customer's experience. For example, replacing the sticker with the weight on fruits or vegetables with a direct message to the check out with the weight of the product. This simplifies the shopping experiences and reduces the need for stickers and paper.

These are just the tip of the iceberg of new ideas in the retail sector that will impact the design and capabilities of weighing instruments.