



## Microsoft Launches New Point of Sale Solution for Small Retailers

Microsoft Point of Sale automates sales, inventory and store management to help small, independent retailers survive and thrive.

REDMOND, Wash. — May 18, 2005 — With today's release of Microsoft® Point of Sale, small retailers can confidently and cost-effectively do what their larger counterparts began doing years ago: pull the plug on inefficient electronic cash registers and manual business management methods.

Microsoft Point of Sale is an easy-to-use, affordable application that enables small, independent retailers to track and manage sales, inventory and customer information. Designed to replace a cash register, the newest addition to the Microsoft Business Solutions point-of-sale lineup allows these retailers to better serve customers by closely tracking sales trends, and to help maintain control — onsite or remotely — of cash, employees and business processes. Retailers can use Microsoft Point of Sale out of the box with their existing PC and peripherals or can purchase complete hardware and software bundles from leading technology providers.

"Microsoft Point of Sale levels the competitive playing field for small retailers, empowering store owners with better insight and control of their businesses with an easy-to-use, affordable solution," said Mike Dickstein, director of Microsoft Business Solutions Point of Sale Solutions. "We are thrilled to deliver a solution today that enables small retailers to be more successful and efficient in their store, so that they have more time for life outside their store."

Rick and Elizabeth Geist don't miss their old electronic register or manual inventory tracking since they adopted Microsoft Point of Sale at The Landing Music Ltd., a small record and CD store they own in Seattle.

They used to spend an hour and a half completing their monthly sales tax report — a task that now takes five minutes. The only way they could be sure of filling a customer request was to manually check the racks. They scanned paper sales logs or polled their employees to find out what was selling. Now they automatically track inventory and quickly process transactions via bar codes on all items. With a few mouse clicks, they know what's hot and what's not and whether they have a copy of a classic or rare album that a customer wants. Moreover, they can suggest other albums the customer should try, based on information stored by Microsoft Point of Sale on the retailer's local PC about the person's previous purchases and preferences. During their days off, the Geists no longer visit the store to see how things are going; they check sales and employee activity remotely via their home PC.

"Microsoft Point of Sale has given us back our lives; we no longer spend endless hours tracking inventory, guessing what stock to order or closing the till," Elizabeth Geist said. "Now more of our time at the store is spent doing what we do best: building relationships with our customers and finding them the music they love."

### Electronic Cash Register No Longer Offers Small Retailers Same Ka-ching

The Geists are among the rapidly growing ranks of small retailers that have abandoned their electronic registers and manual recordkeeping to gain the greater business insight and control offered by POS software and eliminate expensive credit and debit card payment terminals and transaction fees. According to IHL Consulting Group, shipments of PC-based POS terminals grew 12 percent between 2003 and 2004. The firm reported that over 40 percent of single-store retailers are now using PC-based technology.

Paula Rosenblum, director of retail research for Aberdeen Group, agrees. "Small businesses need POS technology not only to survive against retail giants, but also to keep up with other small and medium-sized businesses that are already benefiting from the insights and efficiencies of store automation," Rosenblum said. "The benefits are too great and the investment too reasonable for small businesses to keep getting by with that old electronic cash register and relying on their gut instincts when making business decisions."

Works With the Microsoft Office System and Popular Accounting Software

Unlike other POS products that provide isolated snapshots of a business's aspects, Microsoft Point of Sale offers shop owners a holistic view of their business by working with the Microsoft Office System and accounting applications such as QuickBooks. This integration, along with the product's familiar Windows® interface and customizable touch-screen controls, simplifies and enhances the ease of use of Microsoft Point of Sale for owners and employees. Training on the system typically takes less than an hour.

Familiarity with and confidence in Microsoft software as well as the product's ability to work with popular accounting applications was the tipping point for the Geists, who, after investigating POS solutions for more than two years, chose to implement Microsoft Point of Sale. "Adopting a whole new way of running your business is scary — even when the potential benefits are so readily apparent," Elizabeth Geist said. "We had to trust the technology from the get-go — and we did."

#### Microsoft Business Solutions Expands POS Product Family

Microsoft Point of Sale joins the existing line of Microsoft point of sale solutions, which includes Microsoft Business Solutions Retail Management System. Designed for small and medium-sized retailers, this powerful software package can be customized for specific business requirements, providing retailers with sophisticated functionality at an affordable price. Microsoft Retail Management System works with a range of accounting programs, including Microsoft Business Solutions—Great Plains®, QuickBooks and Peachtree; and the Microsoft Office System. And to better meet the needs of its midmarket segment retail customers, Microsoft Corp. plans to offer enhanced integration with Microsoft Great Plains in coming months.

#### Pricing and Availability

Microsoft Point of Sale is available in the United States through authorized reselling partners. A single lane license costs \$799 (U.S.) MSRP.\*

#### About Microsoft Business Solutions

Microsoft Business Solutions products and services are integrated, adaptable business applications and services that allow small and midsize businesses, large corporations, and divisions of global enterprises to connect employees, customers and suppliers for improved efficiency. The financial, customer relationship and supply chain management applications work like and with familiar Microsoft products such as Office and Windows to streamline processes across an entire organization, giving businesses insight to respond rapidly, plan strategically and execute quickly. Microsoft Business Solutions products and services are delivered through a worldwide network of channel partners that provide specialized services and local support tailored to a company's needs.

#### About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

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