

Remote Control

Some restaurateurs, cafes and coffee shop owners offer remote catering such as portable café bars for functions, shopping center promotions, fetes and fund raising events.

One of the problems facing businesses with remote catering facilities can be getting sales report information back to head office at the end of the day. Very often remote sites may have a power outlet but no phone line connection for a modem, which is the traditional method of sending sales data back.

If there is no phone line available, one way of getting the sales information back to head office is for the café bar operator to carry a notebook PC and use this to retrieve the information from the POS system. The sales data can then be transmitted to head office at a later time when a phone line is available. This may result in delays in head office receiving the sales data and then there may be a problem with leaving a notebook computer at the site during trading. This may be in a busy shopping centre or a fete where there are a lot of distractions for the operator and the chance of the notebook computer going missing.

A new software development from Uniwell POS Australia offers a great solution for those wanting to get information back from a remote sales location to head office. Uniwell has developed a software package that runs on a hand held Personal Digital Assistant (PDA). The PDA can be carried in the operator's pocket and at the end of the days trading used to run a program that connects to the POS system to retrieve and store sales information from the days trading which can then be transmitted to head office.

The data transmission to head office comes in a variety of flavours:

If the PDA is one of the new generation combined PDA/mobile phones the data can be instantly sent back to head office as an email attachment using the mobile phone. The email attachment can then be opened in a spread sheet or integrated into a Uniwell sales reporting software package.

If the PDA does not have a phone inbuilt but comes with wireless access; data can be sent back using a wireless network access point from providers such as Telstra's Bigpond Wireless or Unwired, if or when one is available.

Another option uses a more basic form of the PDA and allows the cafe bar operator to transfer the sales data from the PDA direct to a pc. This can be either direct to the head office pc or the café bar operators home pc from where the sales can be transferred to head office via modem.