



Over the last decade supermarkets have been using technology to change the way consumers shop. **/This is Why** Sharp has developed a range of screens suitable for the retail sector with exceptional images, wide viewing angles, simple connectivity, interactive touchscreen capabilities and more. One innovative Swedish grocery chain, City Gross, has just bridged the gap between traditional retail and e-commerce by launching its first digital store in Stockholm. Its partner, the aptly named Virtual Stores, has exclusively selected Sharp's PN-V601 60" LCD monitors for its digital commerce solution.

Installation Overview

City Gross is a family owned chain of supermarkets with stores throughout Sweden. It sells high-quality produce, often locally sourced and from sustainable stocks. It has a large selection of organic products as well as a healthy ready-meal range. As part of the Bergendahl Retail Group, City Gross has expanded significantly over recent years and has become a front runner in embracing new technologies to enhance its customer experience.

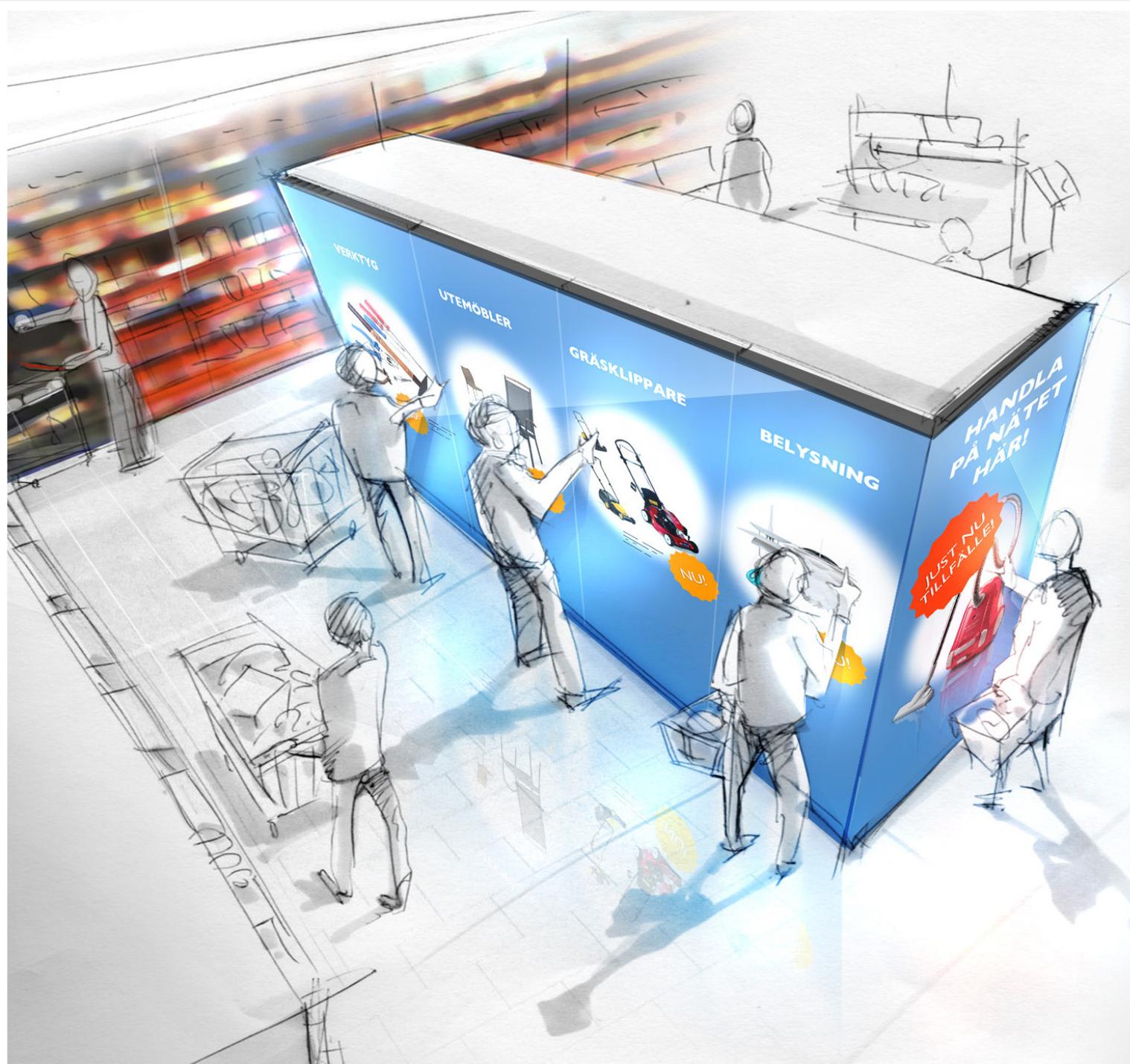
It therefore came as no surprise that Bergendahls Food was willing to pilot a digital store when approached by Virtual Stores, designer and owner of the virtual store concept and solution. The first digital store opened in June 2013 in the Kista Science Tower, Stockholm, which houses IT and technology companies. Central to the digital store concept are large format LCD displays that enable customers to view, and purchase products. The Kista store comprises a stand-alone Sharp video wall comprising PN-V601 LCD monitors in a 2 x 2 format. Two further pilot stores are to follow: one in outer Stockholm and one in the south of the country. Software is currently being developed to allow customers to order by touching the screen, from the autumn. Once the pilot phase has been successfully completed by the end of 2013, the full roll-out will begin. Bergendahls Food is planning to open further virtual stores in 2014.

Virtual Stores chose the Sharp PN-V601 LCD monitors for its digital store solution for several reasons. First, the PN-V601 LCD is a good-looking display with an ultra-slim bezel that creates a video screen that looks like one large display. The screen also provides exceptional image quality and is designed to provide 24/7 operation, with remote control of content and low power consumption making it ideal for sophisticated video wall applications. In addition, Sharp provided close personal attention while the concept of the digital store was being developed.



“Our virtual stores are user-friendly and interactive. We can remotely manage the content, messaging, product assortment and pricing shown on the Sharp video wall in real time on a store-by-store basis. This really is an exciting milestone in digital retail, which is going to have significant benefits for both retailers and consumers. We are fully expecting a huge roll-out of our solution, including, of course, the Sharp monitors, which have more than proved their worth in the pilot deployments.”

Mathias Segelman, CEO, Virtual Stores



The installation

The virtual store comprises a PN-V601 video wall, which displays goods and information. A specific QR code is attributed to each product. Customers have to download an app to their smart-phones. They can then select the items they wish to purchase by scanning the relevant QR codes with their smart-phones before paying online. Once the touch-screen technology is introduced, the process will be even faster and easier, with more products being displayed on-screen. The consumer can choose home delivery or arrange to pick up his bagged-up shopping at a store or a local collection point.

The Sharp monitors are connected to the City Gross network and all content can be managed remotely in real time. Therefore messages, product ranges and promotions can be tailored to the store location, time of day, season or even according to the weather.

Any time, any place

In the Kista Science Tower the stand-alone video wall is positioned in the middle of the entrance hall. It is the perfect pilot store to attract busy, technically minded office workers to do their shopping during their lunch break, for example. Other screens are being placed in physical stores to allow for the purchasing of heavy or bulk goods, like garden furniture. These items otherwise take up a lot of physical space on the shop floor and are difficult for the consumer to transport home.

Depending on the location of the virtual stores, they can be kept open 24/7. And they can be set up anywhere from rural libraries, to gyms, offices, airports, train stations or large events - places where actual stores could simply not exist. Johan Johnsson, Vice President Marketing, Bergendahls Food and Head of City Gross Digital Stores, comments: "We can now launch a digital store in downtown Stockholm in a matter of hours, in locations where it would be expensive and difficult to open a physical store."

However, City Gross does not believe that the virtual stores will spell the end for traditional stores. Johan Johnsson continues: "Consumers will carry on shopping in-store and online, but these virtual stores give us more visibility. We can ensure that our products are in front of our customers and potential customers as often as possible, and we can customise our offerings to the audience, appropriate season, location and time of day."

Indeed virtual stores open up huge possibilities for retailers, irrespective of sector. Companies can get in front of huge audiences and increase product ranges, all at very minimal cost. In addition, they can make best use of retail space in existing stores. The virtual stores are also highly convenient for the time-poor consumer.



Visual impact

The PN-V601 video walls play a key role in attracting consumers to the digital stores. With the 60" screen size and the ultra-slim bezels (which leave just 6.5mm between two monitors), the video wall looks professional. The high resolution, contrast ratio and brightness deliver exceptional picture and colour quality, reflecting in turn the quality of the City Gross products. A full-array LED backlight also ensures uniform brightness across the screen and the zoom display mode and the frame width adjustment function enable one image to be seamlessly depicted over the multi-screen display. Weighing in at just 45 kg each, the screens can be easily wall mounted or erected as stand-alone displays. They are easy to connect to the City Gross network and have proved to be highly reliable in the pilot stores.

The PN-R903 90" LCD monitor may be used in future larger installations and the PN-V602 will replace its sister monitor in any virtual stores located in semi-outdoor environments.



This is Why

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SHARP

COUNTRY: SWEDEN
CUSTOMER: CITY GROSS,
BERGENDAHL RETAIL GROUP
PARTNER: VIRTUAL STORES
EQUIPMENT: PN-V601 60" LCD MONITOR