

EMEA POS Grows While U.S. Slows, Says New Study from IHL Group

2008-03-25

Europe/Middle East/Africa Continues to See Growth in POS Terminal Sales

The PC-based electronic point-of-sale (EPOS) market in Europe/Middle East/Africa experienced a 4 percent shipment increase in 2007 and continues to show strong growth potential in 2008, says a new study released today by IHL Group. Taking advantage of normal cyclical upgrades in Western Europe and enjoying strong oil revenues in Russia and the Middle East, the region is poised to remain strong even while shipments slow in North America.

The largest boost in 2008 will come from replacement of systems installed in the late 1990's (just before the Euro conversion and Y2K) in the Large Format Food & Drug sectors and Hypermarkets. Also helping will be shipments to Russia and the Middle East, which have seen tremendous growth in their retail infrastructures as oil reached and surpassed \$100 USD per barrel. These trends will continue for several years in the more technically-mature EPOS markets (for example, Germany, France and the UK), and long-term for the other EMEA countries, according to the 2008 Europe/Middle East/Africa Retail POS Terminal Study, which is available immediately from IHL.

"Retailers continue to see the EPOS as more than just a method for accurately recording sales," said Greg Buzek, president of IHL Group, a global research and advisory firm that serves retailers and retail technology vendors. "Added functionality at the till, whether in the form of capabilities such as customer returns, inventory look-up, or workforce management, helps retailers see EPOS as THE central system in the store, and they are willing to invest in it accordingly."

According to the study, retailers in the Food & Drug and Mass Merchant segments are experiencing heavy consolidation, while those in the Convenience and Hospitality segments are seeing rapid expansion. Security is also weighing heavily on retailers' POS purchase decision-making process. Retailers want POS systems that are PCI-compliant, in order to avoid data breaches such as those experienced recently by TJ Maxx, Hannaford Brothers and other retailers in North America. These are just some of the findings from IHL's POS market study.

Additional findings include:

Shipments to Russia increased 12% in 2007 and should see similar growth or higher in 2008.

Shipments to developing markets in Eastern Europe and the Middle East nearly equaled those going to Germany, historically the largest recipient of shipments in the region.

WEPOS (Windows(R) Embedded for Point of Service) shipments grew by 254 percent, while Windows(R) XP Embedded grew by 55 percent.

Shipments of Linux-based EPOS shipments grew by 9 percent.

This article comes from Hotel News Resource

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