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Best Fit: Though ideally suited for larger specialty retailers, with the availability of Retail Star Lite, smaller retailers can utilize the product as well. Retail Star offers excellent customization capability, along with applications designed for specific retail sectors.

Retail Star, from CAM Commerce is a fully integrated POS product that offers complete front and back office financial management capability, including excellent POS functionality. Retail Star is a modular system, so users can purchase the modules they need, and add others at a later date.

Product Strengths

- Available in two versions for both small and multi-location retailers
- Modular design allows users to choose only the modules they need
- Complete front/back office integration with website integration as well
- Excellent reporting capability
- Seven day a week system support available

Potential Limitations

- Significant training may be necessary
- Cost may be steep for larger retailers

BASIC SYSTEM FUNCTIONS: 4.75 Stars

Retail Star's navigation screen is divided in half vertically, with system modules listed on the left side of the screen. Clicking on a module will display the features and functions available in that module on the right side of the screen. The current POS interface is cleanly designed, with users able to perform routine tasks such as scanning an item, entering or searching for a product, or accessing customer detail.

Users can also enter both products and customers on the fly. Search and lookup

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Purchasing, Remote Operations, i.START e-commerce module, Gift Card, Frequent Buyer, Maintenance, Reports, Franchise Consolidator, Real Time, and Open to Buy. Users can choose the modules they need and add others at a later date.

Retail staff is provided with a unique user ID and password for system access, with supervisors granting specific access and rights based on position, such as processing returns, voids, and discounts. Managers can also assign employees to a group based on their position, such as new cashiers, cashier supervisors, and floor managers.

The Sales Information option lets users add a vertical sidebar that can be added to a sales screen that provides Sales, Returns, Voids, and Layaway totals, as well as a current to-do list. Retail Star is fully customizable, or users may opt to purchase a system designed for a specific retail industry, such as pet stores, liquor stores, museums, or grocery stores. A new pharmacy interface will be introduced in the fall.

Store managers and owners can easily create quick business snapshots that provide real time information on all locations. Retail Star is ideal for retailers with multiple locations, storing data in a central location for easy access from anywhere. Cashiers can easily process multiple transactions including adding a customer or product, processing a sale, handling a void or return, or enter a layaway transaction. Retail Star's Inventory module allows for multiple pricing levels. The Promotions options allows users to choose an item or group of items to offer special promotions – such as “all sweaters are buy one-get one free.”

The Retail Ice ScoreCARD function provides managers with quick business comparisons. The decision support tool also allows managers to see inventory detail for each product such as on hand-on; on-order; on-hold; sold for each store location. Inventory can be managed at all locations from a single location, and the i.Star eCommerce module allows retailers to integrate their brick and mortar store with the online store. Another great tool offered is the RetailStar Mobile POS system, that

allows users to complete sales transactions from anywhere; integrating directly into

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track customer purchasing habits, sales history, and can also generate email promotions, and targeted sales offers. Layaways, voids, discounts, and returns are easily processed in the POS module, with cashiers able to process or enter special pricing or discounts at the time of sale.

Gift cards allow retailers to create new customers by offering brand-specific gift cards, and the frequent buyer/loyalty card allows managers to track customer activity and offer special incentives and rewards. The updated purchase order module allows users to customize how each P.O. looks to each product buyer.

TRACKING/REPORTING: 5 Stars

Retail Star offers excellent reporting capability. Reports can be scheduled for a particular time, and run on schedule. Report Star comes with a built in report writer, and all standard system reports can be customized as needed. The Report Star wizard guides users through the creation of a new report, with users able to select the level of detail needed, and arrange them on the report as needed. The excellent Sales History reports allow managers to run a sales history by salesperson, department, day of week, or vendor.

All reports are processed in real time, with top level managers able to set reports for all locations. Inventory activity can be tracked with a variety of reports including Best/Worst Sellers, which pulls data from all products in the system and displays activity for that set period. The Management Overview report provides top level managers with an overview of sales for any or all locations, departments, classes, or sub-classes of products. An excellent CRM module tracks detailed information and demographics for each customer, and the system provides excellent audit trail functionality, with all transactions, including sales and register transactions easily recorded and accessible.

INTEGRATION/IMPORT/EXPORT: 5 Stars

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peripherals including card readers, cash drawers, touch screen monitors, printers, and any other hardware devices needed. Employee time is easily tracked in Retail Star with the system tracking login and logout times.

HELP/SUPPORT: 5 Stars

Retail Star offers users excellent help functionality throughout the product, as well as a thorough help manual. The CAM Commerce/Retail Star website offers users immediate access to product demos and white papers along with accessibility to product upgrades, and Point of Sale support is available to users seven days a week, with emergency service is offered as well. System Performance Pro offers small to mid-sized retailers the tools to manage POS terminals from any location. Training is also available over the phone, or on location if desired.

SUMMARY & PRICING

With the availability of both Retail Star and Retail Star Lite, retailers of just about any size can benefit from the extensive array of features found in the product. Subscription agreements for Retail Star Lite start at under \$100.00 per month, with Retail Star pricing available directly from CAM Commerce. Retail

2013 Overall Rating: 5 Stars

Accounting • Small Business

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