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Consumers shopping at Spar retail outlets in South Africa will soon be welcoming state-of-the-art touchscreens at Spar pay points across the country.

Tactile Technologies has supplied 15-inch Elo Desktop touchscreen monitors that are being introduced at the convenience chain's point-of-sale (PoS) stations, to assist customer in paying for their goods quickly and efficiently.

According to Len Venter, CEB Marketing managing director and a key Tactile reseller, Spar is aggressively expanding its footprint in South Africa, which creates great opportunities for further touchscreen market penetration.

"We find that local retailers are looking at how their counterparts in other countries are harnessing touchscreen technology, such as interactive retail catalogues, self-service kiosks, touchscreen gaming applications and

digital signage, to drive more revenue. Elo's touchscreen solutions are the perfect vehicles through which to achieve this," he said.

Abdul Laher, Group PoS systems manager at Spar South Africa said Spar has approximately 800 stores countrywide, and each year new stores open. Additionally, existing stores need software and hardware upgrades or replacements of faulty monitors.

He added that Spar Group encourages its retailers to take advantage of its bulk trading power to save costs on new equipment purchases, and to ensure that they have access to the latest technologies that can be effortlessly integrated into their existing environments.

"The Elo 1515L with IntelliTouch Surface Wave Touchscreen is recommended by Spar as the technology of choice for PoS systems countrywide because of its durability, its stability, its ease-of-use and five-year warranty," Laher explained.

"Until a couple of years ago, the idea of touchscreen technology wasn't on Spar's radar because a normal monitor costs far less. However a lot of retailers are realising the benefits of touch and many have gone that route," he said.

To date, Venter also said CEB Solutions has installed approximately 550 units at various Spar stores but added that the project will be ongoing and the speed of the uptake depends on each independent retailer. "Even though the units are still quite new in the field, the touch screens proved to be incredibly reliable with a failure rate of less than one per cent," he added.

