Natasha's Law: Supporting compliance for independent food retailers

When Natasha's Law came into effect in October 2021, it created a new product labelling challenge for food outlets across the UK.

Items that are prepared and individually wrapped in-store for customers to grab and go, known as pre-packed food for direct sale (PPDS), must now be labelled with a full list of ingredients, highlighting any allergens.

Some businesses have found it harder to adapt than others. Stephen Leake, marketing and technical sales specialist at Fairfield Labels, explains: "The outlets that have struggled the most are the independents – coffee shops, sandwich places, delis and bakeries that don't have the central support that their large-chain competitors do. These businesses needed to work out how to meet the new requirements themselves, so we wanted to solve that problem for them."

With this in mind, Fairfield set out to create a solution that would make compliance easy and efficient, and they partnered with Brother UK to make the concept into a reality.

A tailored solution

Fairfield built its new solution around the Brother TD-2130N label printer fitted with the optional Brother PA-TDU-001 touch panel, which helps to make compliant labelling simpler, faster and more accurate.
Customers simply need to input the relevant details, including ingredients, allergens and shelf-life, into a

ready-made Excel spreadsheet template and the system does the rest, allowing members of staff to select the item from a list and run off a label.

Stephen Leake said:

"Understandably, many of these business owners want easy to use technology – their area of expertise is creating the best possible food for their customers.

We guide them from day one, through designing the system, installing it, training staff and providing after-support for supplies and any issues they're having or updates they need to make. It's all about giving them one less thing to worry about and letting them focus on what they're good at."

Users can choose from two system arrangements to cater to the widest possible range of customers. One where the printer is connected to and controlled by a PC full time, and another where the required data is uploaded to the printer, which is then used as a standalone unit to the printer, which is then used as a standalone unit.

Overview

The challenge

- Create an integrated solution that makes compliance with Natasha's Law labelling requirements easy and efficient

- Allow one-touch label creation, with the option of printers acting as stand-alone units to avoid clutter in busy food-prep areas

The solution

- All-in-one custom labelling solutions built around the robust TD-2130N label printer

- Close partnership working between Brother experts and Fairfield engineers to help design the solution

The results

- An easy-to-use, all-in-one solution to PPDS labelling

- Excellent in-situ performance and end-user feedback

Selling like hot cakes

Since launch, the solutions have flown off the shelves, and Fairfield have delivered more than 120 in-store labelling solutions to customers the length and breadth of the UK. One business even ordered a fleet of 25 printers to use across its chain of stores.

Stephen Leake said:

"The Brother TD-2130N was the ideal choice for this solution, as it's robust enough to operate in busy food preparation areas without risk of damage, and its versatility in terms of being able to integrate with custom-designed systems is outstanding. The P-touch Editor software is easy to use, and the 50mm-wide labels mean we're able to display whatever information the customer needs."

To find out more about Brother's solutions for food labelling visit
brother.co.uk/business-solutions/food-and-hospitality-solutions

Product focus

The TD2130N high-resolution desktop labeller

- 300dpi print resolution
- USB and serial connectivity
- Network capability and optional accessories available including touch panel display, label peeler, rechargeable battery, wireless LAN and Bluetooth
- Compact dimensions and robust construction
- Able to connect via USB, USB Host, Serial, Ethernet and WiFi (optional)
- 6 inches per second print speed