CASE STUDY | The OKOBOX - the environmentally responsible approach of Okotelecom thanks to the Citizen kiosk printer

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In response to the market needs of the Comorian Telecom companies, the company Okotelecom deployed a customised solution in response to the major disadvantages of the prepaid cards of telephone operators.

The principle of prepaid cards by the telephone operators is relatively simple: the user purchases a card credited with a certain sum that can be used for making calls on his or her telephone, until the credit is used up.

In the Comoros, **99%** of all telecommunication is sold through pre-paid systems and often with very low amounts of credits. The prepaid cards have high manufacturing costs and have a disastrous environmental impact. It is for all of these reasons that Okotelecom, with its strong experience that spans more than 10 years with African and European operators, and in particularly in the context of prepaid, has designed the Okobox for the needs of the Comorian market.

The Okobox – a real tool for the dematerialisation of the cards, proposes all of the prepaid offers of the telecommunication operators combined under a single interface and allows equipped points of sales to issue a coupon.

This required the development of a product that is **solid, reliable and requires no maintenance**. The Okobox was created to be very compact, consisting of a touch screen and an application software, all connected to a printer for printing a ticket on thermal paper, which is completely biodegradable. This printed ticket includes a code, making it possible to recharge the prepaid phone. Both the software and hardware have been completely developed in-house.

In terms of size, this Citizen **PMU-2200II** series kiosk printer for ticket printing can accommodate paper rolls **up to 102 mm** in diameter. The reel can be loaded on the left, right or on top in each roll diameter. In addition, loading "easy loading" type paper is very easy and requires no particular technical skill.

In terms of adaptability, the PMU-2200II kiosks (**60 mm wide** ticket) can be integrated both horizontally and vertically. Moreover, this is a high-speed printer (**150 mm/s**), that functions in a wide temperature range. (From -20° C to + 60° C).
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*The choice of printer was essential, as **Frank Castronovo**, director of the company Okotelecom explains:*

*"It was important to choose a reliable and robust printer that requires no maintenance. After studying the kiosk printers available on the market, the choice fell on the PMU printer from Citizen Systems Europe. We needed a technically reliable printer that meets the high demands of adaptability and compactness. The kiosk printer Citizen **PMU-2200II** fit the bill perfectly."*

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His colleague, **Benjamin Thevenot** explains how this project is a complete success: "The Okobox responded exactly to the needs of the market. The enthusiasm was enormous. In fact, this system costs about ten times less than the prepaid card and sales of our operator clients have literally exploded. The fact is, this system allows for flexibility in the amounts credited, which may be very low because the operator no longer has to offset the cost of producing its prepaid card."

"Beyond the performance of the software we developed, the Okobox meets all of the performance and resistance criteria. We have currently equipped nearly **500 outlets** that print 700,000 coupons/month. Our statistics make it possible to establish that **up to 7000 coupons** are printed **per day** on certain Okobox. We have exceeded 35 million coupons printed since the project launch. This allows us to say that the PMU-2200II printer is an excellent product. Four years after the first installations, they still exist and we have not encountered any maintenance problems. Only the print heads needed to be changed sometimes, which again, is extremely easy to do."

"The machine's reliability, robustness and ease of maintenance, validated our decision to choose this printer, which has all of the required qualities. We are working on a similar project in Niger with a new application. Citizen will be associated with this project because we are extremely pleased with this partnership. We will exhibit our expertise for the second year in Dakar at the West & Central AfricaCom trade show on the 13th and 14th of June. You can find all details on our website www.okotelecom.com," concluded Frank Castronovo.

Featuring printer:

CITIZEN PMU-2200II

The most flexible Kiosk printer:
• small foot print and compact design,
• easy to handle and maintain,
• robust and solid.

About Citizen Systems Europe

Citizen Systems Europe operates from London, UK and Esslingen, Germany covering Europe, Middle East and Africa. Citizen offers a broad range of thermal label & barcode printers, portable and dot matrix printers, mini and POS printers. Via a network of specialized partners, these are sold into markets as diverse as industrial, retail, healthcare and mobile applications.

Citizen Systems Europe is a wholly owned subsidiary of Citizen Systems Japan and part of the Citizen Watch Company of Japan. The globally operating group produces its world-famous eco drive watches and mini printers, industrial print systems and machine tools, crystal oscillators, LEDs and other electronic components.

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About Okotelecom

The company has been providing services to operators from the administration of switches to the areas of sales & marketings for over 11 years now. Today, it is offering the unique service of digitalising prepaid account top-ups for distribution in their fixed or nomadic points of sale, in a network or otherwise.

 Tried and tested since its creation for the printing of top-ups, this veritable digital infrastructure for direct & indirect sales networks allows for complete control of the distribution chain by dividing the cost by 4, therefore generating new business perspectives.
www.okotelecom.com