

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Utopia™ Self Checkout transactions surpass million dollars at Strack & Van Til.

Smart, simple and consumer-friendly programming results in negligible cashier-assisted transactions versus industry norms.

Bowling Green, KY – 8/11/08 Sales transactions from the first installations of Pan-Oston's **Utopia™** self-checkout solution in the 30-outlet Chicago area full service grocery and fresh food chain Strack and Van Til recently surpassed the million-dollar milestone in customer-scanned transactions. The rollout of Pan-Oston's **Utopia™** self-service checkout solution in Strack and Van Til is progressing on schedule with 6 stores already up and running.

Utopia™, developed exclusively by Pan-Oston, is the ideal self-checkout solution for independents. It is the only affordable self-checkout solution that is plug-and-go, simple to manage and update, works with or without POS management software, is PCI compatible, and can even be used with your existing lanes and hardware. **Utopia™** is also the only Microsoft or Linux based solution in the self-checkout category and can be up and running in just days instead of the months required for other self-checkout systems.

"I am not at all surprised by how smoothly our installations have been but am amazed at how few cashier-assisted transactions we are having with **Utopia™** compared to our Fujitsu machines," said Henry Bykerk, Director, Information Systems of Strack & Van Til. "Our cashiers love working the self-checkout lanes as it provides them with an opportunity to really interact with customers and in some cases make the checkout process even faster." Strack & Van Til customers have commented on the speed and ease of use with one noting "I made it through the whole self-checkout process without any help from an attendant and that's a first."

Utopia™ can help grocers enhance the checkout experience as well as improve customer loyalty and operating profits. "**Utopia™** was developed to give grocers of all sizes the flexibility to optimize their front-ends with all lanes open all the time," said Jim Vance, President of Pan-Oston.

More information on **Utopia™** is available at www.utopiasco.com.

Pan-Oston, a majority owned subsidiary of Houchens Industries, Inc., one of the largest employee owned ("ESOP") companies in the United States, has been an industry leader in the design and manufacture of retail checkout products as well as a broad range of retail fixtures and fittings for over 40 years. www.panoston.com

Strack & Van Til, a subsidiary of Chicago-based grocery distributor Central Grocers Cooperative, is a regional chain of full service grocery and fresh food stores with 30 retail locations in and around the Chicago and Northern Indiana area.

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