

Operating Systems/Middleware

IBM 4690 Operating System

Version 4

Sales reference guide



Summary

For 25 of the 50 largest retail enterprises in the world – and 39 of the top 100¹ – the IBM 4690 Operating System (OS) is the platform of choice. Designed specifically for retail, it is considered one of the most reliable operating systems available and remains one of the most popular choices for retailers in grocery, general merchandise and many other segments. Building on this well-known heritage, the IBM 4690 OS Version 4 continues to provide a secure, reliable and easy-to-manage platform for advanced software in on demand retail environments. It is highly scalable, working equally well in stores of many different sizes and segments. It also enables retailers to run point-of-sale (POS) and other software side-by-side on a variety of hardware. This creates a single, convenient access point for POS, back-office and e-business applications, and empowers in-store teams to improve productivity and service.

Key messages

1. The IBM 4690 OS is designed for retail

This is an IBM exclusive. General purpose operating systems can create stability issues related to availability and maintenance. These issues do not occur when retailers choose the IBM 4690 OS. With the IBM 4690 OS, retailers get a strong platform for POS and e-business applications in on demand environments. This platform allows retailers to run customized and off-the-shelf applications, as well as new software from IBM and IBM Business Partners. It also maintains tight compatibility with the IBM Store Integration Framework (please see *Store Integration Framework: IBM Store Integration Framework* for details).

2. The IBM 4690 OS provides strong investment protection

The IBM 4690 OS supports a wide variety of hardware, peripherals and software, including all models of the IBM SurePOS™ 700 Series in terminal, controller or terminal/controller configurations and the latest models of the IBM SureMark™ Printer. This broad-based support helps retailers retain current hardware and software, take advantage of more advanced technology as it becomes available, and run everything on the same operating system. In other words, the IBM 4690 OS is designed to allow retailers to operate on demand, adding new capabilities at the right time, without replacing equipment or disrupting the store.

3. The IBM 4690 OS provides high reliability and availability

The 4690 OS is designed to deliver the same retail-hardened reliability and dependable availability as IBM POS systems. Traditional and Java™ applications can both run in terminal offline mode if the connection to the server or controller is lost. Task prioritization, multiuser and multitasking capabilities keep store operations moving swiftly. Nonvolatile memory helps protect the integrity of store data on the server in case of power loss or network interruptions. And multiple servers can back each other up to ensure uninterrupted checkout. All of which helps ensure POS applications run with the high-level availability retailers need to maintain customer satisfaction.

4. The IBM 4690 OS reduces total cost of ownership

It supports thin-client architectures, in which store clients are automatically loaded and maintained by the server and support costs are minimized. The thin-client model also reduces hardware costs with low memory requirements and no mandatory hard disk. The IBM 4690 OS allows retailers to run current and new hardware side-by-side, writing transaction data to the same log with the same level of integrity. This empowers in-store teams to access multiple applications at the POS, reducing the need for additional workstations. Also, the IBM 4690 OS is designed to support centralized systems management.

5. The IBM 4690 OS has built-in Java capabilities

To help retailers deploy current Java technologies on a variety of clients and servers, the IBM 4690 OS supports Java 2, including the Java Virtual Machine Version 1.4.2 and the Java 2 Software Development Kit. By using Java, retailers can capitalize on vast and expanding Java resources, including a large pool of programming talent and Java applications developed by IBM and independent software providers.

IBM 4690 OS

Features	Benefits	The On Demand connection
New security features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced logging of system access attempts Console lockout (after a user-specified number of incorrect sign-on attempts) LDAP support for controller console sign-on 	Improves network security	Operate on demand
Supports hard file partitions larger than 4GB	Increases space available for storing exception logs, item files, transaction logs and electronic check images	Empower employees Operate on demand
Supports access to Self-Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Technology (SMART) data	Enables measurement of hard file utilization and other critical diagnostics	Empower employees Operate on demand
Supports Javax.usb specification	Makes it easier for retailers to attach USB peripherals	Empower employees Operate on demand
Up to 60 configurable background slots	Enables retailers to run more applications concurrently	Empower employees Operate on demand
Additional serial ports	Allows retailers to attach up to four serial devices on select terminals	Operate on demand
Supports the latest models of the IBM SurePOS 700 Series (in terminal, controller or terminal/controller configurations)	Retailers can take advantage of the fastest, most advanced hardware in the IBM portfolio at the POS (via Token-Ring or on-board Ethernet) or in the back office	Revolutionize the store Empower employees Operate on demand
Continues to support existing IBM POS systems, including 4683, 4693 and 4694	Protects retailers' hardware investment	Operate on demand
Supports the latest models of the IBM SureMark Printer that offer Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology, enhanced MICR reading and electronic check imaging	Enables retailers to add new printers at the POS and implement cost-effective Electronic Check Conversion (ECC) while minimizing the risk of losses from NSF checks	Operate on demand
Generic terminal configuration	The OS automatically detects attached peripherals at the POS and creates a custom-tailored configuration file, reducing the amount of time required to track terminal configurations for each POS across the enterprise	Operate on demand Empower employees
Supports InfoZip compression	Enhances compression capabilities for internal and external (customer-facing) functions	Operate on demand
Supports 512MB RAM in terminals	Enables applications to get maximum productivity from POS systems that can use up to 512MB RAM, including select models of the IBM SurePOS 700 Series and IBM SurePOS 4694	Revolutionize the store
Supports Java 2, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Java Virtual Machine (Version 1.4.2) Java 2 SDK (Software Development Kit) JIT (Just in Time) compiler 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows IBM Business Partners to develop new Java applications, and gives retailers more choices for POS software, including applications written to the Java 2 specification Java 2 SDK allows retailers to modify code directly on the 4690 controller 	Revolutionize the store Empower employees
Supports operator display (input/output, touchscreen or non-touch operation)	Provides an intuitive GUI environment that reduces errors and minimizes operator training time	Operate on demand Empower employees
Supports second display for customers (output only for Java applications)	Increases opportunities to engage the customer during checkout	Revolutionize the store

IBM 4690 OS (continued)

Features	Benefits	The On Demand connection
Supports the 14-digit item code, including Reduced Space Symbology (RSS), in accordance with Uniform Code Council (UCC) guidelines	Enables retailers to implement barcode standards quickly	Revolutionize the store
Enhanced Java I/O Processor and Device Manager	Helps extend the capabilities of a Java GUI running with an existing 4690 application	Revolutionize the store Operate on demand
Retailers can run more than one concurrent Java application at the POS	Enables retailers to accomplish point-of-service tasks at the POS, reducing the need for separate service terminals and peripherals in the store	Revolutionize the store Operate on demand
Java and graphics capabilities can be extended to Double Byte Character Set (DBCS) environments	Brings the advantages of Java to retailers operating in Hong Kong, Korea, Japan and Taiwan	Revolutionize the store Operate on demand
Supports routable terminal-controller communications over TCP/IP	Easier network management	Operate on demand
Supports parallel and serial port devices for Java applications	Increases retailers' peripheral choices	Revolutionize the store Operate on demand

Positioning

Portfolio comparison

IBM 4690 OS is the only operating system on the market that is designed and developed specifically for retail. IBM releases new versions of the operating system on a regular basis to maintain the investment protection and functions retailers have come to expect. Currently, the software is Version 4. IBM 4690 OS is a worldwide offering.

Target market

Current and new 4690 customers

Many 4690 customers continuously evaluate other operating systems. They consistently choose to retain the IBM 4690 OS because of its complete package of reliability and security. For these retailers, the IBM 4690 OS remains the right choice because it ensures high overall availability and reliability, with the capabilities necessary to operate on demand. In addition, this robust operating system is designed to meet the specific needs of retail operations and poses fewer challenges during installation and updates than many other operating systems. IBM can meet a wide range of retailer needs with the 4690 OS, and will continue to do so with future releases.

Specifications

IBM POS terminals	4690 OS V4 supported ²	Java Runtime Environment supported	Memory requirements ³
IBM SurePOS 700 Series Models 721 ⁴ , 741, 781	Yes	Yes	64 - 512 MB
IBM SurePOS 700 Series ⁵ Models 750, 752, 753	Yes	Yes	64 - 512 MB
IBM SurePOS 700 Series ⁴ Models 730, 732, 733	Yes	Yes	32 - 512 MB
IBM SurePOS 4694 System Models 307, 347	Yes	Yes	64 - 512 MB
IBM SurePOS 4694 System Model 244	Yes	Yes	32 - 256 MB
IBM SurePOS 4694 System Models 205, 245, 206, 246, 207, 247	Yes	Yes	32 - 512 MB
IBM SurePOS 4694 System Models 104, 144, 154 ⁶ , 106, 146	Yes	–	–
IBM SurePOS 4694 System Models 004, 044	Yes	–	–
IBM SurePOS 4693 System	Yes	–	–
IBM SurePOS 4683 System	Yes	–	–

Total solutions

For Grocery

AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBM 4690 OS • IBM SurePOS ACE • IBM SurePOS 700 Series, model 721 with 128MB RAM • 50-key keyboard with MSR (storm/pearl) • USB 40-character VFD (storm/pearl) • IBM SureMark Printer, model T14 (storm/pearl) or country approved fiscal printers • IBM SurePoint™ Solution, 12" (pearl) • Wide cash drawer (storm)
EMEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBM 4690 OS • IBM Supermarket Application (SA) • IBM ASTRA GUI • IBM StorePay® Software • IBM SurePOS 700 Series, model 741 (storm gray) • USB 40-character VFD (storm/pearl) • IBM SureMark Printer, model T13 (storm/pearl) • IBM SurePoint Solution, model 2WB (12") (pearl) • ADS Anker pop-up cash drawer
AP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBM 4690 OS • IBM SA • IBM SurePOS 700 Series, model 721 • 50-key keyboard with MSR (storm/pearl), POS Keyboard V or POS Keyboard VII • USB Character/Graphics Display (storm/pearl) or USB 40-character VFD (storm/pearl) • IBM SureMark Printer, model T13, T15, TM6 or TM7 (litho/pearl) • IBM SurePoint Solution, 10" (pearl) • Narrow cash drawer (storm)

For Department store/specialty/mass merchandise

AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBM 4690 OS • IBM General Sales Application (GSA) • IBM SurePOS 700 Series, model 721 • ANPOS Keyboard with MSR (storm/pearl) • USB 40-character VFD (storm/pearl) • IBM SureMark Printer, model T13 (storm/pearl) or country approved fiscal printers • IBM SurePoint Solution, 12" (pearl) • Wide cash drawer (storm)
EMEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBM 4690 OS • IBM GSA • IBM ASTRA GUI • IBM StorePay Software • IBM SurePOS 700 Series, model 741 (iron gray) • USB 40-character VFD (iron gray) • IBM SureMark Printer, model TG3 • IBM SurePoint Solution, model 2GB (12") or model 5GN (15") • Wide cash drawer (iron gray)
AP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBM 4690 OS • IBM GSA • IBM SurePOS 700 Series, model 721 • 50-key keyboard with MSR (storm/pearl), POS Keyboard V or POS Keyboard VII • USB Character/Graphics Display (storm/pearl) or USB 40-character VFD (storm/pearl) • IBM SureMark Printer, model T13, T15, TM6 or TM7 (litho/pearl) • IBM SurePoint Solution, 12" (pearl) • Wide cash drawer (storm)



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¹ Top 100 global retailers in terms of revenue, as determined by IHL.

² The IBM 4690 OS Version 4 supports all the terminals listed here, any of which can run existing 4690 applications. Please note that only the IBM SurePOS 700 Series and select models of the IBM SurePOS 4694 POS System can run Java applications.

³ Processor and memory requirements in the terminals and controllers are dependent upon the needs of the Java applications being utilized.

⁴ The SurePOS 721 and 73X are only supported as terminals.

⁵ When configured as a controller or a controller/terminal, the SurePOS 75X requires a PCI NVRAM card.

⁶ The SurePOS 4694-154 is a Japan-specific terminal.