

Solzon Implements RF Solution at Food Processor to Improve Inventory Tracking Capabilities



Case Study

Radio frequency technology is utilized to meet Advance Ship Notice (ASN) requirements and support finished goods inventory with real-time, accurate, data

Advance Ship Notice (ASN) requirements exist for out-going finished good shipments. Using Motorola MC9000 and VC5090 RF mobile computers, the user simply scans the bar-code pallet tag printed on Zebra QL420 mobile printers. The data is validated against the ASN information and then products are recorded into the IBM System I based business application (PRISM). Scanning saves time and improves data accuracy by eliminating keying errors and missed entries.

Our client is now able to electronically send their customers advance ship notices. Using mobile computers and barcodes product is picked, pallets are built, labeled and staged for shipment. The pallet tag is scanned as pallets are loaded onto the truck enabling fast loading and shipment accuracy. Our client is saving time and money, and their customers are reaping the benefits of on-time and accurate shipments.



A win-win for everyone!

RF Solution Simplifies Simulated Recall Handling

Because accurate data is now available in real time, simulating a product recall is easy. In mock recalls, for example, a “recalled” raw material can easily be traced through production, packaging and shipping. This expedites notification to customers and ensures 100% of effected products are recalled. Mock recalls initially took several days due to the manual time required to review production and shipment paperwork. Workers are happy because they can focus on their jobs and customers are happy because in the event of an actual recall, the research and notification processes will be efficient and accurate. Now that all data is online real time, this process has decreased to hours.

Production Benefits by Eliminating Manual Paperwork

From a production standpoint, workers can process shipments and inventory transactions in real-time replacing manual paperwork with electronic processing. Staff is no longer required to enter transactions on fixed workstations; instead transactions are captured via handheld mobile computers as the work was being performed. Improved data capture has led to greater efficiency, cost saving and worker job satisfaction. Inventory accuracy has improved and is now at 98+ % versus 70% previously. The solution positively affected our client in that they can take full advantage of the electronic ASN data available at the time of receipt. The client’s customers are happy because electronic ASN data is now provided to them and shipment accuracy improved focused. **ROI achieved in less than 1 year!**

Client Overview:

- Privately held food processing business
- Founded over one hundred years ago
- Product focus - canned foods, both minimally processed and recipe-based finished goods.
- Multiple locations – Corporate HQ, plus two production and warehouse facilities
- Products sold and distributed nationally

Special points of interest:

Wireless network was installed throughout two warehouse sites:

- Whse 1
320,000 square feet
- Whse 2
110,000 square feet

Solzon Works with Client to Deliver Value-Add Solution

"The payback on our initial ASN RF project is so good that senior management has asked us to find more ways to use the technology. Solzon will definitely be part of our next project."

Solzon consultants analyzed the current activities and flow of each functional area. A conceptual "vision" was created of how those processes could be adjusted or reworked to take advantage of RF technology. The "vision" was translated into the actual automated workflow & steps needed to make it work.

The first step of the solution is bar coding key information to enable quick and accurate scanning of data. Bar code labels are used to identify locations, items, and lot numbers. Next, mobile computers are chosen and programs are created to: collect transaction data, and

direct users through business processes as well as inquire against system (PRISM) data. To enable product tracking and visibility at the pallet level, a unique identifier (license plate or pallet tag) was assigned for each pallet. Once a pallet is defined (in PRISM), the resource, lot, warehouse and location are always known to the system.

To enable real-time, automated, data capture and updates to inventory, all critical processes were RF enabled. This allowed the necessary activity to be transacted through in an on-line, real-time basis.

"Our business relationship with Solzon has proven very beneficial to our company and the working relationship between our technical and operations personnel and Solzon has been exceptional."

Selecting The Right Equipment Enables Success

Motorola, Zebra and Weber products were implemented, including the following handheld, vehicle mounts, printers and print applicators.

Mobile Computers:

- Symbol MC9000 handhelds
- Symbol VC5090 vehicle mounts

Printers and Print Applicators:

- Zebra QL420 & Z4M printers
- Weber Model 5200 High-Speed print applicators

Wireless backbone:

- RS5000 wireless switches
- 802.11b access ports
- NEMA enclosures

About Solzon Corporation

Solzon Corporation is a technology integration consulting firm focused on providing its customers with enterprise mobility inside and outside the four walls of their business. Utilizing technologies such as mobile computing, advanced data capture, RFID, wireless networks and network security Solzon provides turnkey solutions that impact the bottom line. These include worker mobility, inventory tracking, asset management, field mobility, and warehouse automation. Since 1995 Solzon has specialized in providing integrated business automation solutions that improve worker/process efficiency, increase data accuracy, and reduce manual processes.

We focus on delivering solid solutions, return on investment, and creating long term value.

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