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i n t e r m e c s o l u t i o n s

AUTO PARTS SUPPLIER CUTS PUT-AWAY TIME IN HALF WITH RF BAR CODE SYSTEM

ROBBINS AUTO PARTS

DOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

industry

DISTRIBUTION

applications

INVENTORY CONTROL

situation

Robbins Auto Parts, a family-owned company, consists of 11 retail stores and a wholesale business which provides more than 118,000 distinct automotive parts — everything from spark plugs to mufflers — across its distribution network. The company has its own fleet of delivery trucks, conducts business with approximately 200 suppliers, and has a total of 200 employees.

critical issue

Delivery of parts to the stores was too slow. Robbins was dissatisfied with the slow-processing of bar coded products at its receiving dock, which in turn led to a delay in getting parts delivered to customers.

reasons

Robbins Auto was using a bar code system to collect and disseminate inventory data, but the bar coded information was scanned and collected in a "batch" method, and was uploaded to the company's host computer only once per day. This time lag between the receipt of incoming parts and updating of inventory records resulted in slow delivery of parts to the stores. Another factor contributing delay to this system was clerks having to manually verify all incoming parts.

vision & capabilities

Robbins wanted an automated system in which clerks could verify all incoming part numbers and quantities against purchase orders. Robbins wanted the system to immediately update the company's inventory records. This would allow Robbins to rapidly move incoming parts into stock and make them available for delivery to stores.

intermec solution

Intermec radio frequency (RF) terminals provided the capabilities Robbins needed at three warehouses, including a 100,000 square-foot master warehouse in Dover, NH. The system is comprised of an Intermec MODEL 200 Universal Network Controller, MODEL 9181 Base Station Receiver, and four JANUS™ JR2020 Hand Held Computers with built-in laser scanners. The wireless system allows for transmission of data collected throughout the warehouse into Robbins' host computer, a DEC Alpha 3800.

benefits

The amount of time it takes from receiving to put-away has been cut in half, from eight hours to four hours. Additionally, manual labor associated with incoming shipments was cut by 50%. Most importantly, Robbins' customer shipments are faster and more accurate, which results in improved customer service. The new system saves 20 to 30 hours of labor per week, with the system paying for itself in about 12 months.

Intermec