



RF BAR CODE SYSTEM GAINS EARLY EMPLOYEE ACCEPTANCE & PAYS FOR ITSELF IN 7 MONTHS

BLACK & DECKER, CANADA

BROCKVILLE, ONTARIO



industry

MANUFACTURING – HEAVY EQUIPMENT

applications

SHIPPING/RECEIVING · INVENTORY CONTROL

situation

Black & Decker's manufacturing plant in Brockville is part of the company's Power Tools Division. The site employs approximately 400 people who make lawnmowers, workmates, and outdoor VersaPak portable tools.

critical issue

Managers at the Brockville plant believed that certain areas of the plant, especially in the receiving and material handling areas, were operating too inefficiently. Turnaround times in receiving were simply too long and material handling lacked efficiency.

reasons

Black & Decker was using a 20-year-old paper based system that was slow and hamstrung by errors related to manual data entry. Under the paper-based system, Black & Decker's Brockville plant used big labels that showed item number, quantity and location for various parts, enabling warehouse personnel to easily find stock.

vision & capabilities

Everyone at the plant liked the big labels and hoped they would be retained in the company's new data collection solution. Management at the plant wanted to use bar code scans to replace information previously handwritten and entered into their host computer via computer-keyed data entry. Above all, Black & Decker wanted its new data collection system to be readily accepted by employees while providing information related to the following functions: work order receipt, purchase order receipt, manual label printing, inventory transfer, inventory inquiries, and cycle counts.

intermec solution

Intermec business partner, Connectware Solutions, of Montreal, Quebec (Canada) recommended the use of bar code scanners throughout the Black & Decker site, which are linked to a DEC Alpha 2100 host computer via a radio frequency (RF) transmission backbone. Intermec hardware used at the site includes: two vehicle-mounted JANUS™ J2050 computers connected to laser scanners; three portable JANUS™ JR2020 Hand Held Computers; an RF Controller and Base Radio unit; and one RF Repeater; and six RF Gateways to interface three MODEL 3400 Direct Thermal/Thermal Transfer Bar Code Printers and three standard PC's used to generate labels.

benefits

Black & Decker projects the system to pay for itself in seven months, mainly by savings gained from using less labor for data entry. The site has accelerated turnaround times in the receiving and material handling departments, and inventory accuracy has commensurately improved.