



Mobile Enterprise Solutions for Supply Chain Execution



Alamo Group Reaps the Rewards of Mobile Combination

Alamo Group is a leader in the design, manufacture, distribution and service of high quality equipment for right-of-way maintenance and agriculture. The company prides itself in leading their industry and satisfying its customers' needs through innovative, leading edge products; superior expanded product availability; and customer service.

Alamo Group's brands include Alamo Industrial, Tiger, Schwarze, Nite-Hawk, Gradall, VacAll, Henke, Rhino, Schulte, Herschel, Valu-Bilt and M & W. The company has more than 2400 employees and operates 17 facilities in North America and Europe.

Alamo Group's successful business approach allows them to lead each of its market segments technologically and in service, as well as to create top brands and to acquire companies that support this model.

However, expanding product lines and acquiring new businesses creates challenges for the distribution side of any business.

For Alamo Group, this growth and maintaining several distribution centers adds to the challenges of servicing customers efficiently and well.

Problem

Alamo Group's distribution operation was working overtime to keep pace with the business' success. An inefficient, paper-based system in the distribution centers greatly increased the potential for human errors and sometimes hampered customer responsiveness.

The company needed a solution that would automate its manual processes, reduce human error, provide real-time visibility and integrate directly with its ERP system. Alamo Group needed a modern mobile solution.

Solution

The mobile solution for Alamo Group was RF-SMART's automated data collection and Psion Teklogix' handheld devices.

"We searched for a cost effective, scalable solution to multiple business challenges," noted Keith W. Vinyard, Alamo Group's Vice President, Information Technology. "One of our greatest operational needs was to implement real-time data collection to provide up-to-the-second information about the status of inventory, sales order picking and shipping status, and work orders."



Alamo Group selected RF-SMART based on the product's demonstrated strength, easy adaptability to its growth trends and reasonable total cost of ownership.

"RF-SMART proved to be the solution to our many needs," Vinyard said. "Part of Alamo's growth has come through well-managed acquisitions. RF-SMART's

flexibility helps us to prepare for and easily address those transitions."

To run the RF-SMART solution and easily handle the heavy-duty industrial equipment and parts, Alamo Group also required flexible and rugged mobile handheld devices.

"Our environment is not kind to sensitive equipment," said Rick Solano, ERP Application Specialist. "The handheld devices our employees use have to endure a rough, rugged workplace and still be easy to learn, easy to use and 100% reliable. The Psion Teklogix Workabout Pro is that and more for us."



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Another priority in selecting the right solution was finding one that would allow the company to easily “take ownership” once its initial implementation at their 250,000-square-foot DC in Texas was completed.

Alamo Group has since implemented RF-SMART and more Workabout Pro handheld devices in seven additional USA facilities with approximately 150 – 160 users. At this point, Alamo Group is self sufficient in rolling out the mobile combination to new locations and new business acquisitions.

Results Achieved

The Alamo Group staff has embraced the new technology and equipment, recognizing that the system makes everyone more efficient.

“The RF-SMART and Workabout Pros combination is very easy to use and has been well-accepted by our employees,” said Solano. “The overall functionality and performance has been extremely stable and reliable.”

RF-SMART allows Alamo to conduct shipping, receiving, picking and inventory transactions in real-time.

“With the manual system, our distribution center workers walked around carrying print-outs to direct them,” said Vinyard. “Transactions might not be recorded until two days after the transaction took place.”

“Now, we have substantially improved inventory accuracy, and the streamlined processes enable our employees to work as productively as possible,” he said.

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“It’s about customer service,” Vinyard concluded. “Real-time data collection results in substantially increased inventory accuracy which contributes to fulfilling more orders more quickly, reducing errors and providing visibility throughout the business process. That’s the operational side of successfully fulfilling customer expectations and leading in our markets.”

About Alamo Group

Alamo Group is a leader in the design, manufacture, distribution and service of high quality equipment for right-of-way maintenance and agriculture. Their products include tractor and truck mounted mowing and other vegetation maintenance equipment, street sweepers, grading/excavating equipment, vacuum trucks, snowblowers, agricultural implements, front-end loaders, backhoes and related after-market parts and services. The company was founded in 1969 and maintains corporate headquarters in Seguin, Texas with European operations headquarters in Salford Priors, England. www.alamo-group.com