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## **A SPIRIT-ED DELIVERY FOR NYK LOGISTICS**

*Logistics companies tend to serve a wide variety of customers, with very varying needs. For instance, NYK Logistics UK has to service contracts with a range of requirements relating to supply chain visibility. In order to collect and manipulate delivery data effectively, the company therefore needed a versatile solution. NYK asked a specialist independent consultancy, Spirit Data Capture Limited, to source a suitable solution. Spirit recommended the Motorola MC75 and also wrote a specially tailored software application for use on the device.*

NYK Logistics is part of the NYK Group, which has over 120 years' experience in providing sea, earth and air logistics. The UK subsidiary alone has 1,700 employees and 360,000 square metres of strategic warehousing. In 2009, it recorded an annual turnover of £321 million. It provides logistic services to a diverse range of clients, including companies in the automotive, consumer electronics, healthcare, manufacturing and retail sectors.

### **Flexibility and simplicity**

NYK needed a very flexible solution that would allow it to gather electronic point of delivery information and that could also feed data into the company's Route Status Board to provide full visibility of deliveries. Because of the different needs

of its clients, NYK started looking for a generic solution that would be highly configurable and able to meet all of their present and future needs.

Primarily, the new solution had to be able to verify the serial number of a product at the point of delivery to ensure that the right items were going to the right customers. The company also needed visibility of any returns, including the serial numbers.

Martin Shield, Head of IT Support Services for NYK Logistics UK, explains: “Our existing solution wasn’t sufficiently versatile to meet all of our requirements, so we started looking for an alternative. We needed a device that could provide data dynamically, in real time. It had to be capable of recording information accurately and verifying it against uploaded information. Despite this high degree of versatility, it also needed to be simple to use and intuitive.”

He continues: “Based on recommendation, extensive technical experience, and a proven track record of delivery, Spirit Data Capture was chosen to provide a full hardware and software solution. Spirit’s experience in this arena is greater than ours and this aided us tremendously.”

### **Power and connectivity**

Spirit recommended the Motorola MC75 Worldwide Enterprise Digital Assistant. This rugged mobile computer offers simultaneous voice, data and GPS services

(including powerful sensitivity and tracking capabilities). It has an integral bar code scanner and a high resolution colour camera, combined with 3G wireless WAN (WWAN), wireless LAN (WLAN), wireless PAN (WPAN) and IrDA connectivity.

Martin remarks: "Spirit offered NYK the use of its devices and also offered alternatives to the MC75. However, we already use a large number of Motorola wireless handheld devices in our 32 warehouses. Based on our experience of these, we knew that we could trust the MC75 to work well for us." Spirit provided the company with a total solution. This included specifying, writing and testing the software application that would be used on the Motorolas and also providing a comprehensive service contract.

Spirit's application on the MC75s is now being used for a wide range of tasks. These include uploading route information to the device whilst at the base, via Activesync, Ethernet, WiFi or GPRS. Details of the driver and the route are verified via a PIN number and the application then provides the driver with details of delivery and collection points.

Whilst en route, the MC75 transmits GPS positions to NYK's transport management system, which automatically updates the company's Route Status Board. At the point of delivery, the time and the GPS location are captured, the delivery items are scanned and the serial number of the product is validated. In

the event of a failed delivery, notes can be made and pictures taken using the integral camera. When the driver returns to the depot, any returns can be tracked and scanned into the warehouse.

### **Efficiency and traceability**

Martin comments: “The devices have been fantastic. They have increased the efficiency of our operations by eliminating many manual processes and reducing the amount of administration needed. They have also provided us with greater traceability of items, which has reduced our losses, saving us money. Overall, the units have enhanced our supply chain visibility – both internally and externally, as clients can track the progress of items over the web.

“On the technical side, the MC75s are able to communicate with our systems over WiFi when they are being used in the office and we can automatically switch over to GPRS when the drivers are on the road. The drivers’ early involvement in the design phase of the application was crucial to the success of the project and some early scepticism from a very small minority was soon overcome when they started to use the devices.

He concludes: “Spirit have been responsive to our needs and very flexible throughout. I have had no qualms about ringing them for help and advice and we would undoubtedly use them again if and when the need arises.”

