

Mitre 10 streamlines Warehouse Operations with Gamma Solutions Wireless Solution

Case Study



Industry: Warehouse
Market: Home Hardware Solutions
Applications: Data Collection
Products: Intermec CK30 Hand Held Computers



Mitre 10 is one of the most recognised and trusted brands in Australia, having been operating for over forty years, providing customers with 'do it yourself' hardware advice, up to date product information and competitive prices. With over 500 privately owned group stores nationwide Mitre 10 is the first stop for consumers searching for reliable home hardware advice and products.

To fulfil the company's ongoing commitment to its customers throughout Australia, Mitre 10 recently required an upgrade of its existing Data Collection system in its warehouses to a system capable of processing data quickly and efficiently. After considering its options, Mitre 10 turned to a vendor with a proud history of supplying mobile technology and innovative solutions to the Australian market, Gamma Solutions.

By selecting Gamma Solutions to upgrade its existing radio frequency services, Mitre 10 was choosing a well established and professional provider of wireless systems in Australia.

In the past Mitre 10 relied heavily on a manual system of inventory management – a highly labour-intensive process. This form of stock management also resulted in a delay in inventory movement being registered at a national level.





BlackHawke Marshall, Project Manager Mitre 10, commented, "We have found that moving from a paper system to an electronic one has not only allowed for operators to move quicker and achieve more in a day, but it also saves a considerable amount of time in getting information back into our national database".

Gamma Solutions' expertise in the mobile technology industry and its existing relationship with Mitre 10 made it a natural choice when Mitre 10 decided to upgrade its wireless radio frequency system.

"The previous working relationship with Gamma Solutions and their history of providing reliable hardware solutions and maintenance to Mitre 10 stood them above the other options" said BlackHawke Marshall.

Gamma Solutions' ability to provide ongoing and effective technical support was a key selling point which its competitors could not match. A vital part of the ongoing agreement for Mitre 10 was that Gamma Solutions also provides technical advice and on-site national assistance. Upgrading the warehouse management system not only increased productivity but has already allowed customers with enquiries to be provided with up-to-date information on the location of various products within the system. "Stock management is reported pretty close to instantaneously now, allowing for quicker responses at a national level from the various merchandise and inventory teams. This in turn allows the Mitre 10 help desk to more accurately answer customer enquiries about orders and product availability" said BlackHawke Marshall.

Mitre 10's legacy inventory management system did not provide access to a real-time record of the locations and specifics of products throughout the nation, with the process often being hampered by the timely process of manually receiving and despatching orders.

Gamma Solutions implemented Radio Frequency solutions for the scanning and printing of labels in different areas of the Mitre 10 supply chain and warehouse environment. "Gamma Solutions was able to specify a variety of wireless handheld solutions for the warehousing of Mitre 10 stock, this included mobile and fixed position barcode scanners. These barcode scanners are able to be used by operators throughout the different Mitre 10 warehouses providing a real-time inventory solution" said Paul Pleming of Gamma Solutions.

"Gamma Solutions has been a long time supplier to Mitre 10 over the past seven years. We have helped them migrate from their older radio frequency technology through to the newer technologies. Providing better information for management to make decisions at a national level enables Mitre 10 to maximize its return on investment" explained Paul Pleming.

Gamma Solutions faced a number of challenges throughout the process which it was able to overcome. "Unfortunately due to time constraints there was a short turnaround from when we ordered the final numbers of radio frequency equipment to when they were required at the various sites. However, there was not one instance where Gamma Solutions left us hanging on our project" said BlackHawke Marshall.

Mitre 10's radio frequency technology uses Cisco access points, which are mapped out and designed according to the needs of radio frequency coverage in particular areas of the warehouse. This enables operators access to the national Mitre 10 database with ease. The wireless handheld technology being implemented by Gamma Solutions will assist operators in the picking and receiving of stock, ongoing consolidation, reliable and up to date stock tracking and ongoing inventory checks.

The portable Intermec CK30 handheld computers are able to communicate directly to the various Cisco access points in the warehouses. This data is then sent via a local area network to the Mitre 10 computer system, which enables the company to access a national linkage solution for any of its warehouses nationwide, improving efficiency and enabling real time inventory management.

With a total of 190 Mitre 10 staff in warehouses in Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland utilising the newly installed logistics system, Mitre 10 looks set to continue to be an industry leader in home hardware solutions by capitalising on its investment in stock management. The ongoing use of advanced real time technology throughout its different warehouses will allow for a more superior level of inventory management, which will directly result in benefits to customers nationwide.

Michael Byrne, Mitre 10 National Supply Chain Manager commented "the introduction of radio frequency technology to the stock picking process will see the accuracy levels in those warehouses rise 15%, and with the introduction of other technologies we will continue to see further productivity improvements."

The wireless system introduced by Gamma Solutions supports Mitre 10's expanding role in the hardware market in Australia, resulting in increased productivity in all areas of operation from stock management to customer deliveries