



Coca-Cola Bottling Consolidated has high standards for its route

featuring microFlash® 4t thermal portable printer
field service and route accounting ■■■

At the turn of the 20th century, Coca-Cola Consolidated founder J. B. Harrison introduced to consumers in North Carolina's Piedmont region the then-radical idea of drinking this widely beloved fountain drink from bottles. A desire to push the envelope with new innovations has continued for the country's second largest Coca-Cola bottler: Consolidated operates some of the world's most advanced bottling equipment, with some machines running at 2,000 cans a minute. Consolidated works closely with Coca-Cola in developing new drink products for its market. Last year, Beverage World named Coca-Cola Consolidated its "Bottler of the Year."

Problem ■ ■ ■

The drive to reap the most benefit from technology extends to the company's field operations. Consolidated is well-respected inside and outside the bottling community for its ability to efficiently and effectively harness mobile equipment and software. The bottler has evolved with the industry, from early on-truck devices to batch equipment and now to wide area enabled technology. Consolidated currently employs 6,000 and maintains 5,000 mobile assets across its field organization — a clear indication of the importance of mobile technology to its operations. Consolidated's operation includes route delivery operations and vending machine service and repair that takes its drivers across 11 states throughout the Southeast, with drivers toting mobile equipment into and out of countless retail operations and distribution centers, in all kind of conditions, to reach a consumer base of 18.6 million people. Its product line has burgeoned to nearly 450 SKUs.

Solution ■ ■ ■

All that history and experience makes consolidated a sophisticated buyer. So it was a feather in the caps of several leading vendors when the company replaced its Norand handhelds, Intermec printers and custom, in-house-developed software for its 1,700 route delivery drivers. Consolidated deployed Symbol Technologies 9060 handheld terminals, Datamax-O'Neil 4t direct thermal mobile printers and Global Beverage Group's Route Express application, which helps route drivers improve merchandising, delivery and reconciliation of routes. GBG has just been acquired by High Jump Software.

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Director of Food and Beverage, Symbol Technologies

Consolidated chose Symbol "because of the value proposition," says Jim Hilton, director of food and beverage for Symbol's industry solutions group. "There is absolutely the most advanced technology in our handhelds, and at the same time there is the competitive pricing and reliability this kind of DSD business requires." Symbol recommended the printer as well.

Results ■ ■ ■

"They gained productivity by moving to the Datamax-O'Neil printers," says Hilton. "Datamax-O'Neil makes printers that are so durable. Those things just don't break. They offer such reliability that folks like Consolidated can count on them." "Because of its importance to the mobile user and reseller communities, our entire brand promise is based upon reliability and our ease of doing business," says Jeff Osborne, vice president of branding and communications for Datamax-O'Neil Product Development.

Consolidated also brings its high standards in vendor selection to its VAR choices. In the midst of the implementation, following a change in its go-to-market strategy, Symbol recommended that Consolidated begin working with Stratix Corp. to source its mobile equipment. The integrator, based in Norcross, Ga., is known for its significant depth of knowledge, experience, and execution excellence in deploying AIDC and enterprise mobility solutions.

"We had a huge order pending and had to act fast," says Jamie Belongea, director, applications development, for Consolidated. "We established a relationship with Stratix within 30 days and it was a huge success," says Belongea. "Because of our experience with Stratix and the quick turnaround we chose to buy all of our equipment through Stratix."



datamax • o'neil
right by our customers.

They've stuck with the integrator even after the Coca-Cola system recommended another VAR. "Size-wise they're very comfortable for us," says Belongea. "We really mattered to Stratix and Stratix really mattered to us." Consolidated relies on Stratix for procurement as well as to consult and troubleshoot on many aspects of their auto ID, wireless and mobile solutions. Because of its deep mobile applications expertise, the company manages its own integration and rollouts. Damaged equipment is sent back to Consolidated before routing to a depot, for example, so the company can keep close tabs on equipment health.



"We're quite a demanding customer," says Belongea, setting high standards and insisting on weekly contact with providers, even if it's just to discuss industry

technology developments. Despite the scrutiny, Belongea couldn't name one thing she'd like Stratix to improve.

Consolidated's satisfaction is most evident in the fact that the same vendors were chosen for a major refresh of mobile technology for its technical services operation that will deploy in the first half of 2007. The project is linked to Consolidated's implementation of SAP as its ERP platform and a transformation of the company's business processes from conventional to predictive selling. The project includes an extensive supply chain redesign, expanding bulk delivery operations, greatly improving warehouse efficiencies and deployment of the redesigned ATLAS route delivery system.

"This will be our first use of cellular communications," says Belonged. "It will be exciting to have real-time communications." Customers with this level of technical sophistication represent a significantly different sale than mobility buyers with less depth of experience and expertise, and require a high level of excellence, value and reliability from the integrators and vendors that win their business.

