

VAR Installs 1,800 Mobile Printers And Handhelds For Snack Foods Manufacturer



featuring microFlash 4T thermal portable printers with wireless Bluetooth direct store delivery in the snack industry ■ ■ ■



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-Darren Weiss
Ross Computer Systems Manager

Direct store delivery (DSD) installations abound. If you’re one of the lucky VARs already landing these sales, you know how lucrative a market this is. If you’re not, perhaps you should consider investigating how your company can offer DSD solutions. For a good example of a successful DSD implementation, look no further than a recent installation at Snyder’s of Hanover. Snyder’s of Hanover, one of the largest manufacturers of pretzels and salted snacks in the United States, uses JD Edwards (JDE) as its ERP (enterprise resource planning) system.

Problem ■ ■ ■

In the past, Snyder’s delivery drivers used MSDOS- based handheld terminals to keep track of units sold. The terminals had no bar code scanners, which meant that drivers had to key in all product information and quantities using a keypad. In addition, end-of-day duties required the drivers to upload orders via cradles attached to PCs located in Snyder’s warehouses. After researching DSD solutions, Snyder’s called Ross Computer Systems and asked for a demo of the VAR’s software and hardware solution.

Ross Computer Systems creates route accounting software for the DSD industry. Specifically, the VAR creates DSD solutions that reside on both sides of an ERP system. These solutions include the host software (where modules such as order entry, accounts receivable, warehouse inventory, sales analysis, and forecasting reside) and the software running on handhelds carried in the field. In the event a customer already is using an ERP system such as SAP or JDE, Ross Computer Systems has a middleware solution called STORSLink, which connects its handheld solution, STORS, with the ERP system.

Solution ■ ■ ■

In the case of Snyder’s, the VAR recommended its STORS software, running on Motorola MC-9090 handheld terminals. Since Snyder’s uses JDE, the STORSLink middleware was included. “To allow drivers to print delivery tickets in the field, we opted to use Datamax-O’Neil 4t mobile printers with Bluetooth capabilities,” says Darren Weiss, sales and marketing manager for Ross Computer Systems. In addition, Ross Computer Systems recommended some warehouse-side upgrades including Motorola WS-2000 wireless switches and AP-300 access ports (for each of Snyder’s 70 warehouses across the United States). Snyder’s accepted the VAR’s proposal.

Results ■ ■ ■

In all, Ross Computer Systems provided Snyder’s with 1,800 handheld terminals running STORS software and the same number of mobile printers. Today, a Snyder’s driver can use the handheld terminal to scan product information rather than manually key it. Also, the handheld communicates via Bluetooth to the Datamax-O’Neil mobile printer to print a receipt the driver can provide to the store. “The handheld terminals also have SD [secure digital] expansion ports, allowing a Snyder’s driver to back up information to removable media,” says Weiss. “In the event a terminal fails, the driver can swap the SD card into another terminal without losing the day’s work.” Once a



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right by our customers.

driver goes back to the Snyder's warehouse to load the truck for the next day, the handheld can connect to the access points and wirelessly send information to the JDE system, letting Snyder's know exactly and immediately what products need to be replenished in the warehouse. Snyder's and Ross Computer Systems currently are working together on plans to implement the VAR's merchandising handheld solution for Snyder's sales force. More handheld terminals and printers are on the way, as Snyder's hopes to further enable its mobile workforce to take orders at the store and get the information back to the plant in real time.

Use Customer References To Build Your Mobile Printing Clout

You might be asking yourself how Ross Computer Systems landed this whale of a project. In this case, the VAR has a reputation in the route accounting industry that helped the company earn Snyder's business. As mentioned, Snyder's called them. To get to this point, the VAR employs marketing tools that any other VAR could be using. "To show instant credibility, we rely heavily on customer references," says Weiss. "We continue to work on building our reputation so prospective customers will know that we understand their businesses and that we can deliver a successful project."

