

3663 - FIRST FOR FOODSERVICE

Psion Teklogix TekSpeech Solution Helps Leading Foodservice Supplier Streamline Warehouse Operations And Increase Productivity

3663 First for Foodservice is the UK's leading foodservice wholesale distributor. With 1.25 million square feet of storage in 39 depots across the country, 3663 is a major player in the food service industry. It has over 6,300 employees and a modern fleet of 1,000 vehicles delivering to a customer base of 50,000 organizations in the food, catering and leisure sectors. The company has 3 divisions dealing with 'Frozen, Fresh and Chilled', 'Multi-temperature' and 'Logistics'.

"We chose Psion Teklogix because it was the company that best demonstrated to us that it didn't just talk about its solutions – it actually went out and delivered them... The company is well known for a strong track record and a visionary approach to business."

The Challenge

To remain competitive in a tough marketplace, the management team at 3663's Logistics Division decided to change its processes and supporting IT infrastructure to help boost profit margins. The company relied on an error prone and time consuming paper and batch driven system to handle 200 million stock transactions and 37 million cases per year across its warehouse operations. Their 'pick and stick' labeling system did not make the best use of time or labour and was prone to errors – particularly on larger orders.

Consequently, the depots were not operating as efficiently as they could if given the latest technology. To meet the growing needs of its rapidly expanding customer base, 3663 needed a solution that would help it streamline processes to become more efficient.

The Solution

After intensive research, 3663 selected Psion Teklogix to implement Speech technology to boost accuracy and productivity across the organization's four logistics depots in Banbury, Lichfield, Royton and Heywood. Their Minster WMS introduced voice enabled modules, with Psion Teklogix acting as the project manager.

To replace labeling, state of the art speech-directed picking technology manufactured by Psion Teklogix partner, Vocollect, was implemented. Working in conjunction with Minster's software, this is the UK's first end-to-end speech technology solution. Floor staff wears a lightweight Vocollect Talkman T2 Terminal which receives a prioritized list of jobs from the WMS to guide the user through the stages of the warehouse cycle from goods-in, to replenishment, picking and marshalling. The hands and eyes free solution instantly updates the WMS by sending data from the headset to the WMS in real-time.

The Benefits

Implementing a voice directed system has enabled 3663's workers to move stock more quickly and accurately through the depots. The system is designed so that employee's actions are correct the first time - and they can't move to the next action until they have completed a job properly. This increases productivity, accuracy and profitability.

Integration to the WMS enables the management team to access real-time information that shows the precise time a product arrives at the depot, how quickly it is stored, picked, and the length of time it takes to load onto a truck before delivery. Warehouse administration has improved, invoices are issued faster and 3663 has a better view of what goods are coming from suppliers.

Since the installation, 3663 has seen increased accuracy and productivity. The management team has benefited from a heightened level of control that enables the business to focus on core activities and plan for the future. Access to real-time productivity and status reporting has yielded complete knowledge and trace-

ability for both processes and goods while also leading to more effective training and increased retention rates.

“The processes we had in place across our operations were holding us back. The labelling system was very time consuming and awkward with no real way to see what was happening on the warehouse floor, without being there all the time.”

“We chose Psion Teklogix because it was the company that best demonstrated to

us that it didn’t just talk about its solutions – it actually went out and delivered them. The company is well known for a strong track record and a visionary approach to business. That, together with the fact that it has the capability to write a bespoke software package tailored specifically for us should we need it, was very important. 3663 prides itself on a very high level of quality, both in our operations and customer service, and we just couldn’t afford to have any disruption to business while such a massive change to our core pro-

cesses was carried out. We were very confident that the people at Psion Teklogix understood that and would work with us to see the project through successfully. In this market everyone is looking to cut costs in the supply chain and so businesses like ours have to be constantly looking at new ways of streamlining operations.”

Phillip Oliver, Project Manager, 3663



“The processes we had in place across our operations were holding us back. The labelling system was very time consuming and awkward with no real way to see what was happening on the warehouse floor, without being there all the time.”

