

Hot Spots Energize Mobile DSD Solutions

Leverage Wireless To Enable New Field Applications.

From harsh environments to remote network access difficulties, DSD (direct store delivery) applications create many challenges for VARs building mobile IT solutions. It doesn't matter if you're upgrading existing route accounting systems, or designing and implementing an infrastructure for new customers. Primo Water contacted VAR Integrated Solutions in 2005 as the vendor was preparing to launch its national brand of purified and mineral enhanced bottled water. The Winston-Salem, N.C. vendor started with 100 DSD routes in the southeast, with a goal of close to 1,000 in the next few years.

Integrated Solutions designed the route solution to include Hand Held Products' Dolphin 7900 mobile computers and O'Neil PrintPAD mobile printers (integrated printing solutions), as well as its own DocMaster™ @Work: Route™ (DSD solution), and MobileConX® (communications infrastructure) software. "Primo needed to track all of its transactions from the field using an electronic [paperless] system, and we were there from the beginning developing the technology infrastructure that allowed that goal to be attained," said Mike Sweeney, VP of sales for Integrated Solutions.

"In order for DSD solutions to be successful, three key components are required, a rugged handheld device, a rugged mobile printer, and rugged software, all delivered in a reliable, logistically tight package". The combination of the Hand Held Products Dolphin 7900 (with Adaptus™ Imaging Technology 5.0), O'Neil PrintPAD, and Integrated Solutions' software gave Primo the complete solution they needed to be suc-

cessful. Integrated Solutions chose the O'Neil PrintPAD for this project because of the unit's compact enclosure, the integrated handheld cradle, and the ability to charge both the handheld and the printer with one power supply. "With the PrintPAD, there is no guessing on the connectivity between the handheld and printer — if the unit is in the cradle, you've got a connection," said Sweeney. Including a PrintPAD as part of the mobile solution means there are fewer pieces involved than with other mobile printer/handheld combinations. Fewer pieces mean less potential points of failure and a more reliable solution.

"Primo chose Integrated Solutions because of our fifteen years of experience and our ability to design and develop the software, recommend and provide the hardware, and roll out the complete solution," added Sweeney. Integrated Solutions also hosts the solution, provides help desk support, and manages the customer's spare pool.

Leverage Free Wireless For Field Communication

Integrated Solutions' MobileConX software provides Primo with multiple connectivity options (including hot spots) to keep the route drivers in sync with the corporate enterprise. "They needed a route accounting solution that

could synchronize information and receive automatic updates on handheld devices when drivers were out of the Primo terminal. One of the methods the route drivers use to accomplish this is to access the MobileConX central server via public Internet hot spots," said Sweeney. Leveraging free Wi-Fi access points eliminates the cost of wireless plans for



Integrated Solutions included the O'Neil Printpad and Hand Held Products Dolphin 7900 in its solution based on the units' compact size and the ability to use a single power supply for both.

communications and allows Primo drivers to connect minimally (once or twice daily) to synchronize data and transmit delivery information. “Technically, the drivers only need to synch once per day, but some do it more frequently for morning and end-of-day settlement and

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reporting. While hot spots seem great when surfing the Web on your laptop at Starbucks, transmitting mission critical confidential data over that type of portal requires additional security and performance capabilities,” said Sweeney. Integrated designed MobileConX to provide the secure communications required to keep its customers’ information protected.

Integrated Solutions’ DocMaster software creates an electronic image of each invoice the driver prints off with the proof of delivery store stamp, signature, and all of the sales information. The next time drivers connect to the Internet, an electronic copy of the document can automatically be posted to the Web for access by their customers, or be e-mailed directly to a client. Customer service personnel will have immediate access to these documents through the MobileConX WebFront. “This solution not only met Primo’s electronic [paperless route] goal, but helped the company improve its billing time and cash flow, and reduced customer service costs with a customer self-service portal,” said Sweeney.

The Daily Benefits Of Integrated’s Solution

Primo drivers start each day with the Dolphin 7900 and the Integrated Solutions software directing them to the first stop. The driver delivers the product to the store and tracks the inventory with the handheld’s imager by scanning 1-D and 2-D bar codes. The @Work: Route

software allows the Primo driver to complete the order, including checking returned bottles and other transaction tasks. After the customer reviews the transaction, their signature is captured electronically on the Dolphin 7900 touch screen. Then the driver completes the proof of delivery function and the @Work: Route software prepares an invoice. The O’Neil PrintPAD prints the invoice, including all of the transaction information and the customer’s signature. A bar code is printed on the invoice that includes a block for the customer to apply a proof of delivery stamp. Once that mark is applied, the driver scans the bar code on the invoice using the Dolphin 7900, which retrieves the related information and takes a digital image of the store stamp — all with one scan. A copy of the invoice is left with the customer and Integrated’s DocMaster creates an identical electronic version of that form including the transaction data, signature, and store stamp.

The process is repeated at each stop on the route. Any time during the day, Primo’s driver can use the MobileConX hot spot finder and synchronize with the central server using public Wi-Fi hot spots. All of the

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route data collected is transmitted, including invoices and related documents. Customer service personnel at Primo, as well as clients themselves, have instant access to uploaded information via the MobileConX portal.

Integrated Solutions was able to provide Primo with the solution in less than two months and the system achieved payback within six months. Over the last year, Primo expanded delivery to more than 5,000 locations across the United States and continues to grow. 