

case study



Government-Operated Warehouse at Camp Pendleton Reduces Inventory Errors by 90% with RFID-Asset Tracking System

When he took over as the Information Technology Asset Manager (ITAM) at Camp Pendleton, Don Harrington had a tough job on his hands.

With diminished staff and lower manpower to accomplish an increasing workload, a new technology solution was sought to streamline processes and procedures through automation in Camp Pendleton's associated warehouse for ITAM daily operations.

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“At the time I took over the warehouse and our inventory of IT assets, we utilized a basic laptop, printer, handheld scanner and a mobile computer to help us do many manual processes,” said Harrington. “This included utilizing Excel® spread sheet documents placed on clip boards, with highlighters and pens to track our assets.”

As part of his job, Harrington was responsible for overseeing warehouse asset and inventory tracking, which included allowing asset management personnel to receive, stage, issue, DRMO (dispose of assets), recycle and locate IT inventory in the warehouse. In addition to all check-in, check-out and ITAM processes being manual, the warehouse staff was responsible for creating a history of IT assets, which were stored as hard-copy documents in filing cabinets or binders in the established locator system. Using filing cabinets and a binder system to manage documentation presented the staff with many challenges, especially when historical paperwork was required for reconciliation or when they needed to validate various asset details.

The warehouse’s overall processes were slow and completely manual, which made data entry subject to human error. As a result, error rates were high. Many items checked out were not returned once they reached End of Life, or were checked in incorrectly. Additionally, the process to find items or paperwork stored in the warehouse meant looking through hundreds of typed and or hand-written requisition forms or reports in the locator system.

To streamline their processes, Honeywell partner Component Sourcing Group (CSG), a solution service provider specializing in RFID technologies and solutions, partnered with Harrington to create a completely custom RFID inventory asset tracking software system for Camp Pendleton’s warehouse that would allow 100% of their assets to be tracked electronically. The new solution converted all of their manual warehouse ITAM operations into electronic processes and procedures.

Once deployed, the system has reduced human error for each of the ITAM functional areas by 90 percent, and in some cases even higher.

Under the new system, personnel arrive at the warehouse to be issued a specific IT asset specially designated for them, such as a computer, printer or network gear. Each item contains an RFID-enabled label printed from the Honeywell PM43 printers. To check out an item, its barcode is scanned by a Honeywell CN70 mobile computer where it is then loaded into CSG’s ScanWare RFID Asset Tracking Software Solution, which provides item-level inventory management. The system provides the capability for full life-cycle management of all IT assets from cradle to grave and creates everything from initial requisition form to records tracked to disposal.

“Since we deployed, the RFID-Asset Tracking Solution from CSG and Honeywell it has proven the system’s ability to increase the effectiveness and overall efficiency of the warehouse’s operations related to ITAM,” said Harrington.

The ITAM personnel staff are also responsible for checking in new equipment that is shipped to the warehouse, facilitating the turn-in of IT assets, unloading pallets and DRMOing or recycling old equipment – all while keeping track of each step in the ScanWare RFID Asset Tracking system.

As benefits of having this system continue to reveal, they’ve seen impressive results. Since deployment, Harrington notes all aspects of receiving, staging; issuing, turn-in and locating of assets have improved dramatically. The DRMO, recycling processes and locating the historical documents, have also significantly impacted and improved warehouse ITAM operations.

In conclusion, after experiencing drastic decreases in manpower due to staff shortages, the Honeywell and CSG solution has streamlined overall processes and procedures through automation, ultimately creating a solid return on investment.

Key Results Include:

Receiving/Staging of Assets: Time required to process and add 30-40 pallets of 1,000+ assets to warehouse inventory has improved from three days to 4 hours.

Issuing of Assets: Time required to issue 1,000 computers, which included manual paperwork to add in asset IDs, serial numbers, machine names, location, etc., has improved by 50%, from six days down to three.

Locating Assets: The time required to locate 1,000 computers in the warehouse is down from eight hours to one hour.

DRMO Assets: The time required to DRMO 33 pallets of desktop computers (1,000 total) and 5 pallets of laptops (1,000) is down from a full 5-day, 40-hour work week to two days 16 hours.

Recycling Assets: The time required to recycle assets has improved from requiring two full working weeks (80 hours) to recycle 1,000 computer or server hard drives, to one week (40 hours) to prepare 2,000 computers/server hard drives for recycling.

Locating Signed Forms: Previously, staff was required to manually sort through filing cabinet records or binders for received, turned-in, issuing or disposing of assets; this took one work day (8 hours). Under the new system, this now takes 5 minutes or less utilizing the RFID automated functionality.

History Tracking: Previously the system only provided hard copy documentation. The new system allows the documentation to be saved electronically and have a real time record of the Assets History available in minutes based on a search of the RFID Asset Tracking Systems database.

For more information:

www.honeywellaidc.com

Honeywell Scanning & Mobility

9680 Old Bailes Road

Fort Mill, SC 29707

800.582.4263

www.honeywell.com



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