Our focus is on selling software, not printers. Therefore, we had to find an industrial-hardened, thermal printer that would absolutely meet the needs of bulk shippers, while giving us the freedom to pursue our core competency.

Staffan Isaksson, CEO, Unifaun
Fifty thousand Swedish shipping companies can’t be wrong. They’re all using an online transportation management system called Pacsoft Online, a software solution from Unifaun AB that is provided by the Swedish Post Office to its customers. Unifaun’s Pacsoft Online enables Swedish shippers to conform to the Swedish Post Office's stringent package labeling requirements.

When it comes to small shippers with limited numbers of packages, the majority are able to print package labels on a standard desktop laser printer. However, for larger shippers – those printing 50 labels or more per day – a standard desktop printer is not a viable option.

**The Problem**

Staffan Isaksson, Unifaun’s CEO, is in the business of developing cutting-edge software. He doesn’t make printers, although he needs to sell them, along with labels, to satisfy the requirements of his customer, the Swedish Post Office. As such, Isaksson is beholden to the Swedish Post Office to find a thermal printer that meets the demands of the large shippers using Pacsoft Online.

Isaksson’s objective was clear: Unifaun had to find a compact, durable and robust thermal printer for high-volume Swedish shippers. To find the best printer, Staffan tested most of the printers on the European market. “Our tests were designed to help us find a printer that had unmatched durability and quality so that our customers wouldn’t have any trouble with it after the purchase,” he says.

The results of those tests led Isaksson to select the Honeywell MP family of printers, which consists of the Compact series and the Nova series. Isaksson specifically honed in on the MP Compact Series printer as a suitable workhorse for large-scale Swedish shippers. The reason is easy to understand. The MP Compact Mobile printer provides Isaksson’s target – the high-volume shipper – with unmatched rugged and reliable performance in a compact footprint. “The MP Compact Mobile is perfectly suited to the needs of the Swedish Post Office customer who ships from 50 to 500 packages per day,” says Isaksson.

Today, more than seven years after Isaksson’s initial tests, there are more than 1,000 Swedish shippers using the Honeywell MP Compact Mobile printers in warehouses across Sweden. “In seven years, we’ve installed more than 500 MP Compact Mobile printers in Swedish warehouses,” says Isaksson. “In all that time, we’ve only heard of one printer being damaged as a result of rough use. Meanwhile, 25 out of 500 printers made by a different printer company have failed.” Isaksson adds, “We’ve had virtually no trouble with Honeywell printers, and that’s important to us. We can’t afford to have any trouble with the printers we sell.”

While the durability of the MP Compact Mobile printer is a point of satisfaction for Isaksson, the Swedish shippers who use the printer on a daily basis are pleased with it for a number of additional reasons. Able to deliver continuous operation, the MP Compact Mobile is the printer of
choice in Swedish warehouses, according to Isaksson, where ease of use, reliability and high performance are a must. Further, the aptly named MP Compact Mobile is ideally suited for the high-volume thermal printing requirements of Swedish shippers, especially for on-demand printing where space is limited. “Typically, packing stations in Swedish warehouses are small. The MP Compact Mobile fits easily in tight spaces,” says Isaksson.

Isaksson describes how one Swedish mail order company has achieved success by mounting MP Compact Mobile printers on all of their forklifts: “Using a handheld barcode scanner, a warehouseman is able to maneuver around a warehouse with an MP Compact Mobile printer mounted to the forklift. The Pacsoft Online system provides the printer with the correct layout and correct label for the item being picked. Using this system, the forklift driver is able to pick the needed item from the shelf, and then immediately print and affix a label. This method saves time and increases the efficiency of warehouse operations.”

Another important aspect of the Swedish Post Office shipping application is the shipping label itself. The Swedish Post Office has very specific requirements when it comes to the label’s content and size. “One thing that is specific to this application is the label length – it is quite long,” Isaksson explains. “In Sweden, a shipping label has a length of 250 mm (9.8 in) versus only 200 mm (7.9 in) in the rest of Europe.”

The MP Compact Mobile and the MP Nova printers are engineered to handle a label of this length. They also have a unique design that does not require labels to be rolled. Instead, due to the unique size of the label, Isaksson specifies that the labels be folded and placed in a carton directly behind the printer. “Because of the label’s extreme length, we don’t use rolled label material. We don’t want or need a bulky printer designed to house a big roll of labels – there’s no need for label material to be rolled up inside the printer in this application.”

With the virtually flawless performance of the Honeywell MP Series, Isaksson has achieved his goal of finding a printer that meets the needs of the Swedish Post Office’s customers, while freeing him to focus on software development. Today, the Honeywell MP Compact Mobile and MP Nova printers are the only printers Isaksson recommends for high-volume shipping applications. “We don’t see that changing,” Isaksson concludes, “because we haven’t had any trouble with the Honeywell printers. There are no other printers that could do more to benefit our customers.”