

Case study

UTi Sun Couriers



At a glance

Industry: Transportation and Logistics

Application: Shipping

New wireless system streamlines warehouse operations, delivers real-time confirmation of delivery

Fast, reliable service is important to most any business, but in the courier industry it's do or die. Just one hour's delay can leave a significant negative impression on customers waiting for that all-important letter or package.

UTi Sun Couriers, a division of UTi Worldwide, is Southern Africa's largest courier company, specializing in moving express freight to and from any address in South Africa or overseas. With branches throughout the country, UTi Sun has built its business on timely and reliable deliveries.

To further enhance customer service, the courier decided it was time to replace an antiquated radio trunking system and approximately 800 outdated handheld computers. In its place, UTi Sun needed a technologically advanced parcel tracking system with the ability to confirm deliveries in real-time.

Equipping Mobility: Intermec, ProScan and MTN

UTi Sun Couriers management tapped Intermec partner ProScan Systems to design, equip and implement the new system. ProScan is a leader in barcoding, RFID, data collection,

wireless networking, and mobile technologies, and is the sole distributor for Intermec products in South Africa.

The integrator – along with Intermec and MTN, Africa's largest cellular network – delivered the first phase in one of the largest and most advanced combined WLAN and GPRS mobile communication and data collection systems in the country. The system features Intermec 761 handheld computers.

Intermec's 700 Series of mobile computers was the first of its kind to integrate three wireless communication options in a single computer. The handheld computers can accommodate a GSM/GPRS wide area network radio for use as a cell phone, a wireless local area network (WLAN) radio for in-premise applications, and power-managed Bluetooth radio for short-range communication to peripheral computers.

To keep its drivers in touch, UTi Sun Couriers configured its Intermec 761s with GSM voice transmission capability as well as GPRS for transmitting and receiving data collection and delivery information. A WLAN radio allows the computers to seamlessly communicate inside of UTi Sun Couriers buildings.



The computer, which runs Microsoft Pocket PC Operating System and features a large color display and barcode scanner, also captures an electronic confirmation of delivery – key to completing transactions, keeping customers informed on the status of deliveries and jumpstarting the billing cycle. The 761 can withstand extreme temperatures and drops up to five feet, so drivers know that it can handle the daily challenges of work on the road. Intermec also provides training and support for the computers.

On the Road Again

The new system gives UTi Sun Couriers drivers a constant, real-time connection to the company network, even as they move about the country. UTi Sun dispatchers direct couriers to parcel pick-ups, and relay telephone and Internet requests and directions via the computers. Couriers also use the 761 to acknowledge and confirm pickups and deliveries.

Using GPRS technology, UTi Sun can track parcels' movements throughout the shipping cycle, and up-to-date location information can be obtained at any time. Additionally, each Intermec computer is equipped with a 32k SIM card that can be "spent" on voice or data calls, or text messaging – whatever combination best suits the courier's needs.

Hylton McCabe, Intermec business development manager, South Africa comments on the installation. "It's encouraging to see a significant courier such as UTi Sun Couriers demonstrate no fear to invest in new technology, not necessarily just for the sake of technology, but to clearly raise the bar on their competitors and establish themselves to their customers as industry leaders.

"The Intermec 761 mobile computers have totally automated UTi-Sun Courier's logistics process," said McCabe. "In the first six months of deployment, Intermec supplied 300 units to UTi-Sun, along with training and support. We're now up to 1000 units with plans for more.

"UTi-Sun Courier uses these computers in each phase of delivery – from the initial parcel scan at the warehouse, to matching the parcel and waybill, communication, tracking and tracing en route, and then collecting the electronic confirmation of delivery at destination."

UTi Sun Couriers Divisional Director Lubabalo Mtya also weighed in on the successful implementation. "It is not often that four different organizations work together to create such synergy. Surprisingly, the new systems were operational within three months of our placing the orders, so UTi Sun Couriers are now in real-time roving connection with our logistics systems. The Intermec computers have also replaced our couriers' previous cell phones and scanners.

"Our plan was to use the Intermec computers to increase operational efficiencies, add to our service offerings, realign and empower our remote agents and to dramatically increase throughput of parcels at a marginal cost," Mtya continued. "The computers are rugged and easy to use, the couriers love them, the MTN voice and data package is excellent and the support from Proscan and Intermec has been superb.

"As for our stated financial goals – we already see the new system generating more returns than predicted. The equipment will pay for itself in bottom-line benefits within the first year."

Delivering Success

After a successful system roll-out into Gauteng, UTi Sun Couriers accelerated the expansion to Cape Town, with Durban and the rest of South Africa soon to follow. By all accounts, UTi Sun Couriers is very satisfied with the implementation.

"Intermec's input has been integral to the success of this project," said Mtya. "UTi Sun has realized enormous benefits from the 761s, including improved data quality, timing and integrity. Additionally, error rates and the amount of time it takes to capture data have been reduced.

"The company also has strengthened its customer service through the real time end-to-end visibility afforded by the 761s, plus the computers have improved communication between our couriers and agents, operations and customer service personnel.

"From the financials side, the hardware solutions from Intermec have helped UTi Sun increase productivity and reduce waste and duplication of efforts. And we have seen a drastic reduction in data transfer costs as a result of the automation. All these factors add to the company's bottom line and make us one of the most innovative forward, thinking courier companies in South Africa."

Intermec and its partners in the project are pleased with the results too.

"The speed and success at which this project was deployed is testament to the trust and professionalism demonstrated by the partners involved. We are proud that the Intermec 700 series won out over our competitors and is recognized for its unrivalled features," said McCabe. "This, coupled with Proscan's vast knowledge to install and support mobility, plus MTN's infrastructure all came together to form a stand-out solution."

North America

Corporate Headquarters

6001 36th Avenue West
Everett, Washington 98203
Phone: (425) 348-2600
Fax: (425) 355-9551

South America & Mexico Headquarters Office

Newport Beach, California
Phone: (949) 955-0785
Fax: (949) 756-8782

Europe/Middle East &

Africa Headquarters Office

Reading, United Kingdom
Phone: +44 118 923 0800
Fax: +44 118 923 0801

Asia Pacific

Headquarters Office
Singapore
Phone: +65 6303 2100
Fax: +65 6303 2199

Internet

www.intermec.com
Worldwide Locations:
www.intermec.com/locations

Sales

Toll Free NA: (800) 934-3163
Toll in NA : (425) 348-2726
Freephone ROW: 00 800 4488 8844
Toll ROW : +44 134 435 0296

OEM Sales

Phone: (425) 348-2762

Media Sales

Phone: (513) 874-5882

Customer Service and Support

Toll Free NA: (800) 755-5505
Toll in NA : (425) 356-1799

Copyright © 2007 Intermec Technologies Corporation. All rights reserved. Intermec is a registered trademark of Intermec Technologies Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Printed in the U.S.A. 611790-01C 04/07

In a continuing effort to improve our products, Intermec Technologies Corporation reserves the right to change specifications and features without prior notice.

