

Case Study: A Cooler Way of Tracking Temperature-Controlled Freight

H&M Bay Improves Efficiency and Accuracy with Barcode Pallet Tracking System from Barcoding, Inc.

Background

[H&M Bay, Inc.](#) is the premier logistics provider of frozen and refrigerated Less-than-Truckload (LTL) goods. For more than 30 years, H&M Bay has delivered *nationwide temperature-controlled freight solutions*. Headquartered in Federalsburg, Maryland, with six additional facilities across the United States, H&M Bay has an owner/operator network of more than 10,000 frozen and refrigerated LTL carriers.



www.hmbayinc.com

Challenges

For a cold storage provider whose goal is to quickly and efficiently load and unload trucks of temperature-controlled freight, a pallet tracking system is an absolute necessity. H&M Bay's Federalsburg facility had long relied on a radio frequency identification (RFID) system to track pallets moving in and out of its warehouse. However, this system posed several issues. Often, it picked up the wrong tag or did not read the tag at all, since pallets were stacked and moved around via lifts. In these cases, employees had to manually enter pallet numbers into their lift computers. Yet, even if the tag was read properly, the process was slow. If it took too long to read the tag, workers would either manually enter the information or reposition the pallet and wait again for the reader to detect it. Also, readers and printers required frequent reboots, which further affected productivity.

Although the RFID system was sufficient for the Federalsburg facility, H&M Bay decided to look for an alternative solution when it began building a new cold storage facility in Uxbridge, Massachusetts. With the facility 400 miles away, H&M Bay's IT staff could not easily support the technology if problems arose. The company sought a cost-effective system that would more accurately and efficiently track pallets so that it could quickly load/unload frozen freight.

Solution

H&M Bay turned to [Barcoding, Inc.](#), a leader in supply chain efficiency, accuracy, and connectivity. The Baltimore-based systems integrator helped H&M Bay to implement a barcode scanning system consisting of Zebra LS3408er handheld scanners, Honeywell PX6i printers, Zebra rugged vehicle mount computers and Honeywell barcode labels. While Barcoding also provides RFID systems, the company understands the importance of matching the solution to the use case. In some instances – for example, if pallets were moving through a threshold one at a time on

At a Glance

Background

- H&M Bay, Inc. is the premier logistics provider of frozen and refrigerated Less-than-Truckload (LTL) goods.
- Headquartered in Federalsburg, Maryland, H&M Bay has seven facilities across the continental U.S.

Challenges

- Existing pallet tracking system was often unreliable and hampered the receiving process.
- If RFID tags were misread, employees had to manually enter data.
- H&M Bay sought a new, more cost-effective and dependable system for its newest facility in Massachusetts.

Solution

- Barcode scanning system from Barcoding, Inc., consisting of Zebra handheld scanners, Honeywell printers, Zebra rugged vehicle mount computers and Honeywell barcode labels.
- System integration with a custom web-based software application.

Results

- Improved efficiency and accuracy in tracking and storing pallets.
- Enhanced worker productivity and expedited the receiving process.
- Implemented two barcode systems for less than the cost of the previous system.

“Our barcode system is fast and reliable – our workers love it. They can point and shoot barcodes on the move and from far away, and feel like they are in control of the device. We are no longer picking up accidental scans or requiring manual data entry, so our process is much more efficient, accurate, and connected thanks to Barcoding, Inc.”

-John Walker
Information Technology
Manager
H&M Bay, Inc.

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a conveyor belt – RFID may be the best-suited technology. However, for H&M Bay’s specific application, barcodes fit the bill.

The barcode system works the same as the previous system, but provides greater pallet control: When a truck arrives at one of H&M Bay’s four receiving stations, pallets are unloaded one at a time. A worker reviews an electronic copy of a pallet’s load sheet, verifies that it is in an acceptable condition, clicks on the order and enters the number of cases on the pallet into a custom web-based software application. A barcode label identifying the pallet is automatically printed and attached to the pallet, which is then moved into cold storage by a lift. From the lift, a worker scans the pallet’s barcode and the location barcode, sending the pallet’s location information to the software application. Then, when trucks come in to pick up freight, H&M Bay can quickly locate the appropriate pallets through the system and verify that they are the correct items with a simple scan.

Notably, Barcoding not only provided the necessary hardware, but also guided H&M Bay throughout the hardware selection process, making sure that devices worked with the application and server until IT created a working prototype.

Results

By implementing a barcode scanning system, H&M Bay has improved its receiving process, while reducing its costs and raising productivity. Without the need to wait for RFID readers to recognize tags or for workers to manually enter data, H&M Bay is saving time, eliminating the probability of human error and ensuring that frozen freight is quickly put into storage.

Following the success of the barcode system at H&M Bay’s Federalsburg location, the company implemented an identical solution at its new Uxbridge facility. Because of the system’s low cost of ownership, H&M Bay was able to deploy two working barcode systems for less than the cost of the previous system.

“Our barcode system is fast and reliable – our workers love it,” said H&M Bay Information Technology Manager John Walker. “They can point and shoot barcodes on the move and from far away, and feel like they are in control of the device. We are no longer picking up accidental scans or requiring manual data entry, so our process is much more efficient, accurate, and connected thanks to Barcoding, Inc.”

Barcoding, Inc. is a systems integrator specializing in the development, deployment, and management of enterprise-wide solutions that drive efficiency, accuracy, and connectivity. With dedicated practices in Supply Chain Architecture and Analytics, Automatic Identification (AIDC), Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Consumables, Software, and Professionals Services, Barcoding impacts tens of thousands of organizations in a wide range of industries by increasing revenue, reducing operational costs, and improving customer experiences. Founded in 1998, Barcoding is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland, with offices across the United States. For more information, visit www.barcoding.com.