



Griffin Greenhouse Supplies Optimizes Warehouse Operations with Mobile Computers and Barcode Technology from OCR Canada

Griffin Greenhouse Supplies stocks, inventories, and sells a wide range of products, from plants and seeds to pots, soil, and chemicals, to growers in the horticultural and agricultural spaces. The third-generation, family-owned company, founded in 1947, is headquartered in Tewksbury, MA, and has 15 distribution centers throughout the United States.

Business Challenge

Before 2019, Griffin used paper-based processes, printing orders and pinning them to boards in the warehouse. Employees would spend time parking forklifts and walking back and forth to the boards for orders. Then, when they'd complete orders for shipping or fulfillment, they'd return paper orders for data entry. The process was inefficient, limited employee productivity, and often resulted in errors due to illegible handwriting or keying data incorrectly. The company also wanted a faster, more efficient way to handle cycle counts and reconcile those counts against inventory data in its management system.

Bob Hawkes, Director of Information Technology for Griffin, said the company decided to digitize its operations with barcode technology and developed a web-based app in-house to deploy first at its Massachusetts headquarters.



Industry: A leader in distribution of Greenhouse and Nursery Supplies in the U.S

Application: Mobile Computers and Barcode Technology

Challenge: Upgrade from paper-based processes to time with cycle counts and order fulfillment

Featured Solution: Honeywell Dolphin CK65 rugged mobile computers, Honeywell RP4e mobile printers, TrueSupport Premium, and a proprietary application

Key Benefits: Time savings, greater accuracy, easier employee training, and enhanced warehouse organization

Griffin

The Solution

Griffin contacted OCR Canada for information and advice on the best devices to upgrade processes at its distribution centers, beginning with its flagship site in Massachusetts. With the advice of OCR Canada, Griffin chose Honeywell Dolphin CK65 rugged mobile computers. These rugged devices have a touchscreen and a keypad and enhanced 1D and 2D scanning that enables goods reads from up to 10 feet. The CK65 is rugged, able to withstand 8-foot drops to concrete, and rated IP64 for resistance to damage from water, dirt, and dust that are common in a greenhouse supply distribution center.

For barcode label printing, Griffin chose Honeywell RP4e mobile printers for supply chain and shipping labels. “These can be mounted on forklifts to allow for label printing in the warehouse,” says Hawkes, who worked as a Warehouse Manager himself.

Although Hawkes didn’t immediately choose support plans, he found that as he added more sites, it became more difficult to keep up with device management. By adding TrueSupport, he was able to turn technical support, troubleshooting, asset tracking, repairs, and life cycle management over to OCR Canada.

Benefits and Results

At first, Griffin was hesitant to give up paper processes. “But we didn’t go two days before we turned the paper processes off,” Hawkes says, “This was a plug and play installation.”

Cycle counts became more efficient. “The solution changed the process from something that took employees four hours to an hour or less,” Hawkes comments.

He adds that Griffin now operates more accurately, training is easier, and employees that handled data entry could be reassigned.

By 2022, Griffin had five of its 15 sites using the new system and planned to roll it out at one or two new locations each year until all have upgraded from paper-based processes to barcodes and scanners.



What we needed next were durable, reliable devices that could access the internet. Everything is working much better than it used to, and we’re pretty happy with that. TrueSupport is very beneficial since we have a small IT department. Devices are set up when they arrive. The Trueview portal is very easy to use and provides insight in location and status of devices as well as tickets and quote requests.



– Bob Hawkes, Director of IT, Griffin Greenhouse



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