



LEVERAGING MODERN TECHNOLOGY IN A PAPER-BASED ENVIRONMENT

ABOUT BEAVER PAPER

Beaver Paper's products circle the globe in over 51 countries around the world; carried by distributors and direct sales out of their Georgia headquarters and distribution facilities in Los Angeles and Willstätt, Germany. They offer a product portfolio of sublimation media for use in a variety of applications such as soft signage, desktop printing, and large and grand format printing. They also offer paper for the sewn products industry.

Beaver Paper's 160K sq. ft. warehouse consists of huge mill rolls of paper they convert into various smaller sizes. This specially coated paper is used in sublimation printing where ink is transferred into the paper through dye-sub printers. The ink is then transferred from the paper to fabric, signage or even coffee mugs by use of a heat press.

PRESSING FOR AUTOMATION

Beaver Paper did not have a barcoding system in place, although many items in inventory had a barcode label on it. David B., IT Director with Beaver Paper, knew a barcoding solution would greatly improve their inventory management process, so he started instituting small changes with an off-the-shelf barcode reader. This helped him envision workflow changes and where efficiencies could be made.

When David met with Barcom, he had three goals he wanted to accomplish by modernizing his warehouse:



Reduce amount of time to conduct inventory counts. It would often take as many as four days to complete, with two of the four days being a weekend (involving overtime pay).



Improve location accuracy. Picking and putaway was time consuming when large raw materials were difficult to locate.



Reduce errors. With a few thousand SKU's to manage, manual processes were slow and prone to error.

GOING PAPERLESS

Barcom recommended a solution for a rugged, fast-paced environment with the flexibility to mobilize their workforce and decrease transaction times. The Honeywell CK65 Handheld Computer was chosen for the bulk of their warehouse operations. Here's why:





Shipping & Receiving—Workers scan barcoded items and correct labels are printed for shipment; when material is received in, items are scanned and recorded to match order quantities. Any discrepancies are detected before materials are put away.



Picking & Putaway—Picking transactions take less time; pick ticket is scanned and the device indicates correct item location and quantity. After items are picked, barcode is scanned again, and items appear as “picked” in the system. Less time is spent on putaway transactions because correct location is indicated on the device when barcode is scanned.



Inventory Tracking & Management—Quarterly inventory counts take just one day instead of four days now, freeing up resources for other business priorities.

Pinpoint Accuracy

To avoid misreads on tall shelves, Honeywell’s centering feature was used to narrow the imager’s field of view so that it would only read the barcode intended to be read.

The CK65 integrated easily with Beaver Paper’s ACE Warehousing solution from Lanham Associates to enable more accurate inventory management and a more efficient warehouse environment overall.

Beaver Paper was determined to implement an automated system that would reduce overhead expenses and eliminate costly mistakes in their operations. With Barcom’s help, they were able to improve processes and streamline workflows:

- Today they are running cycle counts and monitoring inventory regularly
- Pickers are more efficient and accurate
- A color-coded bin location labeling system for inventory material on racks help users identify items more accurately
- Overhead location signage in open areas, and a flexible-range scanning feature on the CK65 mobile computer makes it easier to locate a roll of paper stacked 20-feet high

“The partnership we have with Barcom has been very successful,” said David. “I was impressed with the level of professionalism displayed by the team. Their knowledge of barcoding and labeling processes helped us discover a new way to resolve our unique challenges. They treated our project like it was important, and their actions really showed us that they were genuinely interested in seeing us succeed.”

ROLL OUT IMPROVEMENTS

“When you’re talking about big mill rolls and a clamp truck moving this kind of material, manual processes can mean a lot of extra time and effort,” said David. “We introduced a lot of changes to our team, but because they were positive changes, we had very little resistance to it,” he added. Users got comfortable with the new process quickly, and the learning curve consisted of about a week of hands-on training.

Streamlined Processes

Eliminating manual processes and adding greater mobility in high volume transactions like picking and shipping meant increased worker productivity and higher accuracy rates.



Are you ready to roll out a new, more modernized solution for inventory management?

Contact Barcom today to get started.