

NORTH AMERICAN AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURER TRUSTS LOWRY SOLUTIONS TO INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF DIRECT PART MARKING



SITUATION

In the automotive sector, where vehicle or engine parts are often subjected to conditions that barcode labels cannot handle, direct part marking (DPM) is a valuable tool for traceability and automatic identification. In instances where parts have defects, it is important to properly track which parts need reworked and to document any process changes that are required.

A leading North American automotive manufacturer was relying on a manual data entry process to properly sort, dispose of, or correct parts that had quality problems or required other corrective actions to be taken. This client designs, engineers, and manufactures engines and other components for industrial equipment, especially vehicles. Although the manufacturer utilized vision systems to automatically inspect and analyze every part, there were many instances in which defects were detected only after the parts were complete.

This manufacturer's manual process was not only inefficient, but also much less accurate than it needed to be. The automotive industry relies on productive and streamlined processes in order to remain profitable. The inefficiencies of the manual process were leading to profit losses for this organization, so they turned to Lowry Solutions for help.

SOLUTION

The team at Lowry Solutions, a trusted partner of Honeywell, conducted an analysis of this automotive manufacturer's operations and designed a solution that addressed their problem and eliminated a variety of inefficient processes. Lowry determined that the CK71 Handheld Computer and the EA30 High Performance 2D Imager Engine from Intermec, a subsidiary of Honeywell, would be ideal for reading barcodes that are either laser-etched or dot-peened directly onto automotive parts.

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CUSTOMER PROFILE

Industry:
Automotive Manufacturing

Solution:
Intermec CK71 Handheld Computer
and EA30 High Performance 2D
Imager Engine

Benefits:
Eliminated an inefficient direct part
marking process
Improved inventory visibility



In addition to reading barcodes that are direct part marked onto a variety of automotive components, the combination of the CK71 and EA30 automatically enter the recorded data into the manufacturer's system. To date, 350 units (plus accessories) have been deployed for this solution. The installation process began with an investigation in which the CK71 was determined to be the superior handheld computer for the client's applications. After the technology was decided upon, Lowry began conducting the installation, which took place over the course of a few months.

RESULTS

The transition from the manual process to the handheld computers made it easier than ever to properly and efficiently record and correct automotive parts that had quality problems or other defects. The Intermec CK71 reads the DPM, and the worker can use the handheld's intuitive interface to quickly add the information into the system. The solution eliminates human error from the process, and the collected data can be analyzed to improve the manufacturer's operations.

Any time an organization replaces a manual process with an automated one, productivity stands to improve. While it is too soon to establish the return on investment (ROI) for this solution, the manufacturer stands to increase profits as a result of the operational efficiencies the handheld computers and imager engines provide. The solution employed by Lowry features trusted, high-quality products from Honeywell that will provide tangible benefits for the manufacturer.

"This client came to us in the hope of eliminating a time consuming and rather unreliable manual process. We analyzed the situation, and it was immediately obvious that their method of quarantining defective parts could be greatly improved. At Lowry Solutions, we partner with the leading product manufacturers in the industry in order to offer a full suite of solutions to our customers, so we teamed up with Honeywell to deliver the most robust direct part mark scanning solution."

- Michael Lowry, President and CEO of Lowry Solutions

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Lowry Solutions, Inc.

(888) 881-2477

info@lowrysolutions.com | www.lowrysolutions.com