

eSMART[®] VOICE PICKING SOLUTION FROM BEC HELPS HYDRASUN GAIN EFFICIENCIES IN ITS PICKING AND PUT-AWAY PROCESSES

THE COMPANY

Established in 1976, Hydrasun is a leading specialist provider of integrated fluid transfer, power and control solutions to the energy, petrochemical, defence, marine and utilities industries worldwide.

With a solid history of providing excellent levels of service to its customers wherever they are located within its global network of operational bases and partnerships, Hydrasun is able to ensure the availability and consistency of its product and service offerings.

Hydrasun has an enviable track record for successfully delivering flexible hose, hydraulics, integrated instrumentation products, umbilicals and extruded solutions and integrity management services worldwide. It was this core drive for quality and consistency at the heart of the company which prompted Hydrasun to investigate an alternative solution when it felt that its product picking and put-away processes needed to be improved upon.

THE PROBLEM

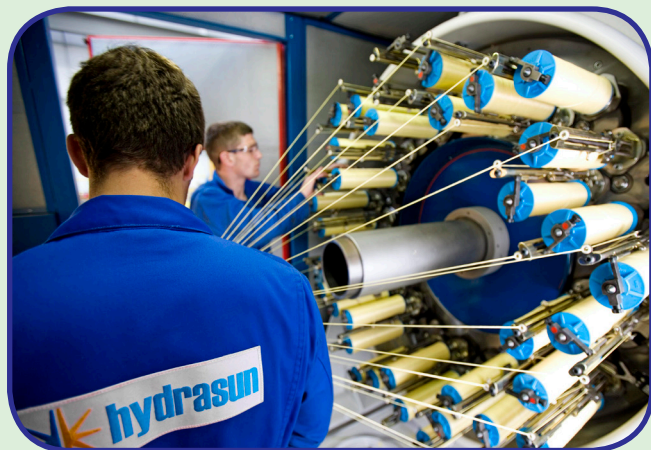
Holding more than £20 million in stock inventory, Hydrasun carries around 12,500 different types of small parts within its sizeable warehouse and distribution centre in Aberdeen, including items such as hose fittings, valves and filters. With such a high throughput of items moving through the warehouse

With over 12,500 types of small parts being moved through its warehouse and distribution centre, Hydrasun refines its receipt, picking and put-away processes through the implementation of eSmart[®] Voice. The voice system has enabled Hydrasun to increase order accuracy, accurately manage stock and significantly reduce errors despite the high throughput rate.



each and every day, it was becoming increasingly difficult to control and manage the accuracy of stock moving in and out of the facility.

Paul Fortey, IT Project Manager at Hydrasun, comments "The small parts section of the business can be extremely complex due to the nature of the items that are being picked for the customer. With up to 500 lines sometimes being present on a single order, we were getting issues with the wrong number of items being picked or the incorrect product being selected, especially as so many of our products look very similar. In the case of our range of hose fittings, some of these are serial number specific, so pick accuracy is key with items such as these. We were seeing a number of incorrect orders coming through to our inspection team and ultimately to our customers. It became increasingly clear that something needed to be done and that a proper, structured solution had to be put in place to prevent this from happening. Overall, we needed to reduce errors and gain a greater handle on all activities which were occurring within the small parts section of our warehouse."



THE SOLUTION

After gaining a full understanding of Hydrasun's key requirements for a new, improved system, BEC recommended its eSmart® Voice software solution and Honeywell Vocollect Talkman A730 devices with SRX2 headsets.

With a proven and trusted track record in supplying and implementing voice technology within a range of warehousing and distribution centre applications, BEC is a specialist provider of future-proof and innovative automated data capture solutions designed to integrate seamlessly into any host ERP system to fulfil business and commercial requirements.

Philip Jarrett, Director of Sales and Marketing at BEC, explains "Conceptually, voice-directed technology is very similar to traditional RF scanning, but prompts are delivered and responses are provided verbally. The Honeywell Vocollect voice solution can help businesses increase worker productivity by up to 35 percent, whilst reducing errors by up to 50 percent."



BEC's eSmart® Voice software solution has been developed with voice technology at its core rather than as an add-on feature, which allows Hydrasun to experience the benefits of Vocollect voice within the small parts section of its warehousing facility.

Fortey continues, "This new solution means that every transaction around the picking and put-away processes within the small parts sector of the business now involves voice. We selected the Honeywell Vocollect A730 Talkman device and the SRX2 advanced speech recognition wireless headset having been particularly impressed with the built-in Vocollect TouchConnect™ technology. This allows workers to quickly pair wireless headsets to the mobile devices, thereby reducing shift start-up procedures from minutes to seconds. The solution also provides other time saving features, such as battery runtime remaining, allowing workers to ask the Vocollect device when a battery change may be needed, helping them to plan and eliminate unnecessary travel time in the midst of completing an order. In terms of BEC's eSmart® Voice software platform, this, as well as the entire solution, has integrated seamlessly into our existing Syspro ERP system."

THE RESULT

Fortey concludes "The results which Hydrasun has experienced as a result of the new system from BEC have been far-reaching. The number of errors which we were encountering has been significantly reduced, in terms of what is being sent to both our inspection team and our customers. We have achieved a much greater control of all our small parts picking, receipt and put-away processes - so much so, we are looking to extend the solution to our larger parts product portfolio.

We are also experiencing a much more efficient use of human resources within the organisation with staff finding the new solution extremely easy and intuitive to use. In fact, even after the initial pilot phase they wanted the new solution to be installed immediately! Workers are now able to carry out their tasks much more efficiently and are able to concentrate more on what they are doing, as they are working hands and eyes-free. Since the devices rarely fail, morale has also greatly improved."