

CLOSETMAID GETS THE JOB DONE WITH LXE

CASE STUDY

CLOSETMAID, a division of Emerson Electric, is a leading manufacturer of home storage and organization products. The company ships its products to retailers and installing dealers in the home building industry from distribution centers in Chino, California; Ocala, Florida; Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania; and McAllen, Texas. The Ocala and Chino facilities are also manufacturing sites, and there are two additional manufacturing facilities in Grantsville, Maryland and Reynosa, Mexico. The company depends on LXE products to track merchandise and, in turn, maintain efficiencies throughout the supply chain.

CLOSETMAID



For manufacturers, keeping close track of products and maintaining a steady order-processing stream is essential to ensuring delivery to customers on a timely basis and, in turn, retaining a competitive edge. ClosetMaid is no exception—and with multiple manufacturing and distribution facilities handling thousands and thousands of orders daily, getting the job done would be even more challenging were it not for a long-standing partnership with LXE.

PRODUCTS NEEDED TO OPERATE 24/7

The nature of ClosetMaid's business necessitates that the company equip its facilities with highly reliable, durable equipment. "At times, we're operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and at times, we're running three shifts five days a week," says Karen Schultz, computer operations manager. "But whatever our hours, we need technology that works properly and doesn't malfunction—because if we can't scan product, we can't ship it, and if we can't ship it, we can't serve our customers." LXE's products offer the high degree of reliability and durability the company requires to maintain peak performance in its manufacturing facilities and distribution centers alike, she notes.

ClosetMaid currently utilizes two of LXE's Windows CE.NET/Intel® X-scale-based rugged wireless computer offerings, the VX6 and the MX3X. Workers employ both types



of devices to obtain instructions to move materials from location to location in the facilities, as well as for picking and putaway directions. This information is conveyed from ClosetMaid's IBM AS/400 server over a

2.4-gigabit wireless network. Data from bar codes affixed to pallets and other containers for inventory is collected via integrated scanners and transmitted back to the server.



MULTI-MODAL AND MULTI-USE

The VX6 is a vehicle-mounted model, while the MX3X may be used in vehicle-mounted or handheld modes. ClosetMaid likes the versatility of both units. "Each one supports our faster network and the AS/400 platform, as well as the real-time, rather than batched, transmission of information to our server in Ocala," Schultz notes. "In addition, with the MX3X, we can cover a wide range of applications. In the rare instance that one of the vehicle-mounted VX6s happens to malfunction, we can take an MX3X and put it in that unit's cradle to perform tethered scanning. We also have integrated scanning support for 'pick-and-run applications.'"

Meanwhile, the units have displayed excellent resistance to shock and vibration. Standards-compliant water and dust protection enclosure ratings have also contributed to their durability and reliability. "The end-result is that we're never dead in the water with our scanning," Schultz asserts.

CONTINUED SUPPORT AND SERVICE

ClosetMaid also continues to receive top-notch support and service from LXE, according to Schultz. She especially likes the fact that LXE maintains a call center in the U.S., staffed by knowledgeable in-house technicians who work stateside rather than abroad. "You just don't get the same kind of help when

LXE

you have to contact a call center overseas,” Schultz explains. Schultz also appreciates the fast turnaround provided by LXE should any of its equipment require repair. “Although we have a ton of equipment, we still need to have our units back at our facilities and up-and-running as quickly as possible,” she notes. “With LXE, it’s just a five- to seven-day wait from start to finish, which of course helps to keep our facilities running as they should be.”

She adds that LXE has “bent over backwards” to ensure that any issues are addressed rapidly and to ClosetMaid’s satisfaction. In one instance, communication between three or four LXE devices and the server in one of the facilities was not entirely consistent. “Reception was in and out, and it had to do with a firmware upgrade,” Schultz recalls. “A technician took it upon himself to resolve the situation. LXE has even taken the initiative to bring in sniffers to look for excessive activity that might be causing dropped connections. But from this company, we would expect nothing less—and we’re never disappointed.”



About LXE Inc. LXE helps companies extend corporate networks to mobile workers in demanding conditions by providing easy-to-use, tough and reliable wireless computers. LXE rugged mobile computers are used by organizations to drive down costs and improve customer satisfaction.

LXE develops innovative hand-held, vehicle-mounted and wearable mobile computers with integrated wireless and automatic-identification technologies, backed by worldwide customer support. The company collaborates with customers and a network of technology, software and reseller partners to create winning solutions.

LXE is a division of EMS Technologies, Inc. (NASDAQ: ELMG), a leading supplier of wireless connectivity solutions. For more information, visit www.lxe.com.