

Bochane Tire Hotel Gets a Grip on Real-time Data with the Lynx PDA from Datalogic



Overview

Bochane, an automobile business in the Netherlands, has a rich history going back 80 years. This family-run business has been very successful, leading to much expansion in recent years. The Bochane Group now has 19 branches across the Netherlands, selling various brands of cars. In addition, the group operates two Athlon Service Centers, a financing and insurance division, a leasing company, a car rental division and a car damage repair business.

In 2010, Bochane opened its first tire hotel in the town of Ede. It occupies an area of 1,600 m² and stores 4,000 sets of tires. A year later, the company opened a second tire hotel in Tiel, which also serves as a sales outlet for the company's web shop, winterbandeninactie.nl. Then, the Bilthoven Tire Hotel opened in 2013. During peak periods, the Bochane tire hotels store over 12,000 sets of tires.

The Challenge

"We want to help our operations by always knowing which sets of tires are stored where; the wear and tear pattern of a tire, our coverage ratio and the client mix. We want to have as much transparent data as possible at our disposal," explains Marcel van Ommeren, Bilthoven Tire Hotel Coordinator. "Therefore, a good database that can be accessed from all our branches is essential."

Bochane commissioned Efficiency Online in Amersfoort to implement database software. The hardware and applications were supplied by JNC Service in Houten. "Our first and foremost demand for process automation was that tire registration be executed impeccably and efficiently at each location with subsequent updates," continues Bas Voorn, Parts Manager at the Bochane Group. However, the scanner that was initially deployed did not feature enough options to support further automation because it was only capable of batch registration. Van Ommeren added, "we wanted to get real-time information, including track & trace capabilities." Keeping this in mind, JNC Service advised Bochane to switch to the Lynx™ PDA from Datalogic. This compact and handy PDA offers state-of-the-art technology with 4G, Wi-Fi, GPS communication, Bluetooth technology and a camera. In addition, the high-capacity battery can easily last an entire shift.

The Solution

"The migration to the new PDA went very smoothly," says Voorn. Using Windows Mobile, the Lynx processes data in real-time over the Wi-Fi network in the tire hotels. Other functions were soon added, such as automatic registration of tire tread depth, which is measured by a digital gauge and passed to the PDA via Bluetooth technology. The Lynx PDA forwards this information to the database, making it

even more consistent. "Before, analog measurements were taken for tire tread depth with the information entered into the system manually," explains Van Ommeren. Now, it is also possible to perform a three-point measurement, which is much more reliable. Furthermore, the PDA quickly and efficiently monitors whether a tire set is complete or not. Each tire is given a unique code and the four unique codes, in turn, form a unique code for a set of tires. The Lynx PDA also registers tire delivery, for which it automatically recognizes the GPS location, reducing the number of actions required and reducing errors.

The Results

Bochane has benefitted in several ways from the system using the Lynx PDA. Data is registered and processed accurately and far more efficiently. The process is fully automated, reducing overall costs. Voorn estimates that the efficiency improvement amounts to approximately 25%. Secondly, it is now easier to monitor the entire process. All users of the system have more reliable data at their disposal, which means that customers are provided with a higher level of service.

There are still some items on Voorn's wish list. "If you want to keep providing optimal service for a reasonable price, innovation must be continuous," indicated Voorn. "One of the options we hope to add in the short term is the capability to link pictures to our database, which can be used for recording rim damage and other applications. With its built-in camera, the Lynx PDA does that as well."

Customer: Bochane Tire Hotel

Industry: Transportation & Logistics

Application: Warehouse management

Country: The Netherlands

Datalogic Product: Lynx PDA

Datalogic Partner: JNC Service - Houten