

Datalogic Provides ‘Tough’ Tracking of Meat Products at Rungis International Market

Mecarungis processes over 100,000 tons of meat annually. With the onset of Mad-Cow disease, each piece of meat must be traceable back to its processing plant. To meet this demand, Mecarungis selected the Datalogic PowerScan industrial readers as the tool most perfectly suited to the harsh environments of meat packing plants and refrigeration units.

Mecarungis Selects PowerScan™ Industrial Readers to Track Over 100,000 Tons of Meat Annually at the Rungis International Market

Overview

Since 2000, the traceability of meat products has become essential in the food industry. Every piece of meat sold to consumers today is required to have a bar code containing information such as the country where the animal was slaughtered, the ID and authorization number of the slaughterhouse and the authorization number of where the meat was cut.

The Rungis International Market in Paris, France is the largest wholesale food market in the world and a major meat product wholesaler, serving 18 million customers throughout Europe. Mecarungis is the company responsible for the IT Management of meat products sold at the market. They provide centralized traceability and identification information for more than 100,000 tons of meat going through the V1P hall and distributed to 15 companies located in Paris. Mecarungis also provides the wholesalers with hardware such as printers, networks, weighing stations and portable terminals.

The Challenge

Blood, humidity and coldness. At the Rungis International Market in hall V1P for meat products, the conditions for using bar code readers for identification and traceability is not easy. The cold temperatures make it challenging for bar code readers to operate efficiently and the codes are often damaged, which makes them difficult to read.

When Mecarungis had to change its obsolete hardware four years ago, “it had to be done very cautiously,” remembers André Picard, an IT engineer at Mecarungis who has managed the renewal of the devices. Moreover, meat traceability and tracking is a very delicate subject in the meat business, especially since the onset of Mad-Cow disease in the last decade. “We needed a very deep understanding and knowledge, technically speaking, of the product, but also of the environments where these readers would be used, and both had to be compatible!”

The Solution

To find a new solution for tracking meat products, Mecarungis worked with Districode, a Datalogic Partner. Districode has been providing Mecarungis with various IT hardware and solutions for more than ten years and was able to offer perfect knowledge of Datalogic's products and of the challenges presented by Mecarungis' environment.

After an initial consultation where several tests were conducted, Mecarungis selected Datalogic's PowerScan™ PM8300 mobile scanners with Datalogic's STAR Cordless System™ for narrow band radio communications and the PowerScan™ PBT7100 readers featuring Bluetooth® Wireless Technology. These readers were selected because, "they perfectly adapted to the harsh environments where we are working. The PowerScan readers are robust and easy to install and to use," Picard underlined.

The PowerScan PM8300 industrial reader in particular offered Mecarungis great functionality due to the bidirectional radio system, which enables interaction between the host system and the operator. This means that the user can get immediate feedback directly on the device without having to go back to the main work station, which, of course, improves productivity.

Moreover, the bar code labels attached to the meat are frequently damaged by humidity, water and other environmental factors, which to be very challenging to read in the past. The testing, however, provided evidence that both PowerScan readers have absolutely no problem reading the damaged codes on a daily basis.

Mecarungis was also able to take advantage of Datalogic's patented 'Green Spot' technology, which provides the operator with 'good read' confirmation directly on the code. Mecarungis was pleased with this feature and according to Picard, "it is very convenient in our environment, which is often very noisy and where a 'beep' would not be loud enough for the operator."

The Results

As a result the collaboration between the three parties, Mecarungis was able to conduct and successfully complete their transition to new scanning hardware. After a quick implementation, Mecarungis is now using the PowerScan readers inside the market and has confirmed that the readers are indeed perfectly suited for the harsh environment in the V1P hall.

Mecarungis is particularly pleased with the selection of Datalogic as their vendor because the durability of the PowerScan readers will provide them with a long lasting investment, saving them repairs and new hardware costs in the future.

Most importantly, the new investment in PowerScan readers has enabled secure and reliable traceability and tracking of meat products inside the market, which has increased their customers' satisfaction. Mecarungis can rest easy knowing their customers are not only receiving the best products, but safe products.

Customer

Mecarungis

Industry

Manufacturing

Sub-Industry

Food & Beverage

Application

Track and Trace

Country

France

Datalogic Product

PowerScan™ PM8300

PowerScan™ PBT7100

Datalogic Quality Partner

District