"The use of an RFID solution enhances Correos' competitive-ness as a result of a more efficient management of postal processes and an improvement in the quality of its services."

—Regina Defarges,
organizational deputy director, Correos

Correos

INDUSTRY

• Transportation/Logistics

KEY BENEFITS

• Improves quality control and the traceability of the over 5 billion deliveries each year

• Increases reliability of delivery time

• Enables compliance with European Union standards

SYBASE TECHNOLOGY

• RFID Anywhere™

Correos, the Spanish postal service, handles over 5 billion postal deliveries each year and serves over 19 million homes and 2 million companies a day. Its modern network of logistic centers is fitted with automated processing equipment using cutting-edge technology. Correos uses Sybase technology to implement a radio frequency identification project in order to improve delivery times and streamline operating procedures.

CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY

Correos, the Spanish postal service, is the country's leading company in terms of number of employees, with a workforce of 65,000 people. The company handles over 5 billion postal deliveries each year and serves over 19 million homes and 2 million companies a day.

It has over 10,000 customer service points and a virtual office open 24/7 at **www.correos.es**. Its modern network of logistics centers is fitted with automated processing equipment using cutting-edge technology.

Correos has successfully implemented the largest RFID project in Europe. The state-controlled company has introduced a radio frequency control system, called Q-RFID, in its 19 Automated Processing Centers (APCs) throughout Spain. The company's investment included specific software and its integration in the Correos computer systems, purchasing 5,000 passive electronic labels and installation of over 2,400 permanent antennas and over 330 readers for those 19 APCs.

The acquisition of this solution enables Correos to have cutting edge technology which complies with the standards set by the European Union (ETSI EN 302 208-1 and EPC GEN 2) and was approved at state level by the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade. The technology ensures quality control and the traceability of postal deliveries (packets, correspondence and mailbags). Controlling the quality of the delivery time is fundamental for Correos, given the large area in which it operates and the dispersion of the delivery addresses.

AUDIT AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SERVICE

At Correos, outside panelists check nearly 200,000 deliveries each year to obtain information on letter delivery times. In the first year, approximately 40,000 deliveries will have an electronic label or tag, which will provide detailed information about their journey through the Processing Centers.

When a tagged letter passes by one of the more than 2,400 antennas installed in the 19 APCs, the reader sends the date, time and identifier number of the letter to a local computer. This resends the information and the point where the item has been located to a central server, where it is added to the postal service quality control system. Intermediary measurements indicate the status and transit time of a letter at each stage of the process, allowing the company to oversee the logistics management and adopt corrective measurements when a fault is detected in the system. The Correos solution is an essential tool for improving the quality of the postal service.

SYBASE®

Correos has also acquired four mobile antenna systems, which will be installed at strategic spots throughout Spain, to perform temporary checks at other admission, processing, distribution or delivery units. In addition, the company plans to check and manage the 40,000 shipping containers that circulate throughout the logistic network, for which purpose it has purchased 42,000 passive electronic labels to be incorporated in those assets.

RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION

RFID allows a firm to manage and monitor products, parts and assets in the business processes and throughout the whole company. It can provide a better service, reduce costs, improve planning, control access and increase security. Many companies in various industries have begun to explore the advantages of transforming the data generated by an RFID reader into valuable business information. Correos recognizes the following advantages of the solution chosen by the State-controlled Company:

- Cost of the development and deployment of RFID solutions reduced.
- Investments in the existing corporate technology optimized.
- Scalable architecture to satisfy the increasing deployment needs of the company.
- Organized and meaningful information sent throughout the company, even to mobile devices.
- Easily integrated into the database management relational systems.
- Real time data supplied to support systems for decision making.
- Data transformed into valuable commercial information.
- Rapidly locates and determines the availability of critical resources.
- Management and mobilization centralized.

Sybase provides a full RFID infrastructure to dynamically manage the distributed infrastructure of the company, allowing very precise data to be collected at each control point determined by the customer. This data is processed according to the defined business rules and is integrated into its applications, databases and data warehouse.

Thanks to the implementation and the use of this technology in its Automated Processing Centers network, Correos has become the forerunner and first postal operator to use technology that is being introduced in companies from every sector. Correos' innovation will be significant to the its quality control and management.

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