

# Throttleman

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– Miguel Maya, Associate General Director of Throttleman

## INDUSTRY

- Retail

## KEY BENEFITS

- Slashes five to seven days off of the time items spend in the supply chain
- Helps maintain the company’s reputation as a leading fashion house by getting the latest fashions to stores faster
- Enables Throttleman to meet sales goals
- Reduces storage space by 60 percent

## SYBASE IANYWHERE TECHNOLOGY

- RFID Anywhere

The Portuguese fashion retailer Throttleman wanted to decrease the time it took its apparel to get from its manufacturer, through its distribution center, and on to store shelves in order to meet its sales goals and retain its reputation as a premier fashion house. It achieved these objectives by implementing an item-level RFID system powered by RFID Anywhere from Sybase iAnywhere.

### RFID MAKES A FASHION STATEMENT, INCREASING REVENUE AND OPTIMIZING KEY PROCESSES

The fashion industry is defined by near constant change. It is about trends, imagination, and helping individuals reveal aspects of themselves without having to say a word.

Throttleman, one of Portugal’s premier fashion houses, understands the importance of fashion and has distinguished itself by anticipating its customers’ needs and offering them unique ways in which to express their individuality and imagination. The company, which has grown by more than 160 percent over the past few years, also understands that fashion can be a perishable commodity. It is important that the right merchandise be available in stores at the right time. Delays can be costly.

To address delays, Throttleman implemented an item-level RFID system to automate its shipping and receiving processes and to reduce the amount of time its merchandise lingers in its supply chain.

The system—RetailID—was developed by the Sybase Portuguese Professional Services team with hardware delivered by Creativesystems, including Tagsys readers and printers and ticketing from Avery Dennison’s Paxar division. RetailID is built upon RFID Anywhere software from Sybase iAnywhere. With this system, Throttleman is able to identify items quickly as they arrive from the manufacturer in India and ensure that the correct items are shipped to its stores throughout Portugal and Spain. Speed and accuracy in this process is of utmost importance, as Throttleman’s manufacturer ships 1.5 million men’s and women’s fashion items annually.

Prior to installing RetailID, Throttleman’s distribution process was handled manually. When shipments from the manufacturer in India arrived at Throttleman’s distribution center in cargo containers containing up to 60,000 items, they had to be checked manually, item-by-item. Then, when shipments were sent to the stores, the items were hand packed and manually recorded, resulting in significant errors.

### RETAILID SPEEDS MERCHANDISE THROUGH THE SUPPLY CHAIN WITH NEAR PERFECT ACCURACY

RetailID is a very straightforward system that clearly demonstrates the benefits of RFID technology.

The manufacturer in India applies a Paxar EPC Gen 2 RFID label to each item to be shipped. The manufacturer then programs and verifies the tags at its site before shipping the goods. It also sends the retailer an advance shipping notice listing the items being shipped. When the boxed garments arrive at Throttleman’s distribution center, they are placed on a conveyor and sent through a Tagsys 3-D tunnel RFID interrogator. The interrogator captures the tag ID numbers with an accuracy of 99.9 percent, and sends that data through a wired LAN connection to Throttleman’s software system. RFID Anywhere matches those numbers with the numbers on the advance shipping notice to validate that the correct items have been received. If it determines that ID numbers are incorrect or missing, the RetailID system illuminates a warning light on the warehouse floor alerting the employees to check the contents of the box.

“Our RFID Anywhere-powered system has provided a number of important benefits including a reduction of 60 percent in storage space in our distribution center, faster shipments to our stores that translates into a gain of four selling days, and a significant optimization of our back-end processes. In addition, we now have the ability to order by store rather than by family item, and this further simplifies our operations.”

—Miguel Maya, Associate General Director of Throttleman

When items are repacked for shipment to Throttleman’s stores, the tags are scanned in the same tunnel to compare the ID numbers against the packing list before being loaded on trucks. Throttleman then sends an advance shipping notice to the stores.

Using this process, Throttleman can validate 15,000 items per hour with only one RFID tunnel. The automation of this validation process reduces the time items spend in the supply chain by five to seven days.

#### **RFID ANYWHERE IS KEY TO PROCESS OPTIMIZATION**

RFID Anywhere is a flexible software infrastructure that integrates business logic and processes with a variety of automatic data collection and sensor technologies including RFID, barcodes, mobile devices, PLCs, location tracking systems, environmental sensors and feedback mechanisms. This infrastructure enables the creation of intelligent sensor networks out-of-the-box. By using RFID Anywhere, sensors are able to work together as an intelligent network by combining, organizing and coordinating these technologies through a common management structure, advanced feature set and event-driven development framework.

“Using RFID Anywhere, it’s possible to follow the whole receiving and validation process and to integrate that information directly with our ERP system,” says Miguel Maya, Throttleman’s associate general director. “We were able to develop and implement our RetailID system in just seven months thanks to the combined efforts of our partners and the power of RFID Anywhere.”

#### **SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS AND A COMPANY PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE**

“Our RFID Anywhere-powered system has provided a number of important benefits,” adds Maya, “including a reduction of 60 percent in storage space in our distribution center, faster shipments to our stores that translates into a gain of four selling days, and a significant optimization of our back-end processes. In addition, we now have the ability to order by store rather than by family item, and this further simplifies our operations.”

“We knew we needed to speed up our receiving and distribution processes in order to meet our sales goals. Our RetailID system has enabled us to achieve this objective. As a result, we will generate increased sales revenue thanks to better availability of the latest styles on the shelves. Now that RFID has solved some of the main issues in the supply chain, Throttleman can enter a whole new era of customer experience. Thanks to RFID, Throttleman is now a company prepared to face the future.”

Based on the success of RetailID, Throttleman anticipates expanding its use of RFID technology to include inventory management and point-of-sale functionality.