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*“Even the project’s biggest skeptic told me
‘I love barcoding’ after we deployed RFgen.”*

CHRIS LORENTZ | BUSINESS SYSTEMS ANALYST

Insitu

Leading manufacturer of unmanned aircraft systems improves warehouse operations with RFgen Mobile Foundations for Deltek Costpoint.

At a glance...

Industry

Aerospace
and Defense

Application

Inventory Management
Custom Application
Development

Environment

Deltek Costpoint
7.0.1

Insitu Inc. is a leading manufacturer of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) for defense, commercial and civil applications. An independent subsidiary of The Boeing Company, the Bingen, Washington-based company designs, develops and produces high-performance, cost-effective UAS that are deployed around the world.

The Challenge

Within its manufacturing operation, Insitu operates a busy warehouse. As the company grew, the transaction volume in the warehouse also grew. The warehouse leadership team wanted to improve efficiency and looked to MIS and warehouse staff to find it by implementing mobile data collection solution for support. Insitu used barcode software in the past, but the previous software was unreliable, lacked flexibility and did not integrate with Deltek Costpoint.

“We needed to have accurate inventory tracking, efficient inventory transaction processing in receiving, part location, transfers, kitting, sales orders and cycle count. We wanted a user-friendly tool that would be reliable and interface with Deltek Costpoint. Finally, we wanted to make sure our users were well-supported in their transaction volume,” said Business Systems Analyst, Chris Lorentz.

The warehouse and MIS team evaluated two solutions, ultimately choosing RFgen Mobile Foundations for Deltek Costpoint, a suite of pre-written, pre-validated data collection solutions enabling best practices for material management and supply chain logistics control.

The Solution

RFgen is the only Deltek recommended mobile solution for providing real-time, bi-directional information exchange between Costpoint and barcode scanners, handheld devices, RFID devices, PLCs and scale type devices. “RFgen offered the transactions we needed out-of-the-box, along with some transactions we’d really like to use in the future. A key factor was its interface to Costpoint,” Lorentz said.

The Insitu team was impressed by RFgen’s Business Analysis Workshop (BAW) implementation methodology for requirements gathering. “RFgen captured the user story and showed us what the screens would look like so users could envision the end result. The BAW was an excellent process; RFgen captured 85-90 percent of our requirements up front, which was fantastic,” said Lorentz.

For deployment, Lorentz opted for an agile, two-phase approach so she could get user feedback throughout implementation. “The RFgen team delivered one of the cleanest rollouts I’ve seen in my career, and I’ve been in this business for quite a while,” Lorentz said.

The Result

RFgen has helped the warehouse team improve efficiency and inventory management. Mobile data collection with RFgen has enabled Insitu to:

- Improve inventory control for more efficient movement of materials and parts.
- Mobilize data collection to replace manual warehouse processes with automation.
- Save labor by reducing trips through the warehouse to fulfill manufacturing orders.
- Speed up the process for issuing products to sales orders.
- Transfer inventory between locations by scanning alone.
- Enable workers in the warehouse to print barcode labels easily to the nearest centralized printer.
- Improve the process for inventory counts to get more accurate counts and location information.

Issue to Manufacturing Orders

“One lesson we learned with our previous software was that picking parts for one Manufacturing Order (MO) at a time slows us down,” was the comment by several team members. RFgen provided an effective solution; Insitu warehouse employees can pick parts for a single MO or for multiple MOs at once, minimizing trips through the warehouse.

“We can input a list of MOs and RFgen displays them so we can pick them in location order. This is fantastic,” Lorentz said. “In a large warehouse, this saves us many trips as opposed to going from location to location for each individual MO. Workers place each part into a bin for the correct MO as they’re issuing it. It’s a huge time savings, and our users just love it.”

Issue to Sales Order

RFgen sped up the Issue to Sales Order process so much that a new label printing requirement had to be added to the project before proceeding to phase two of the deployment. The Insitu team was delighted to request a new automated shipping label due to boxes ready to ship stacking up so fast that their manual labeling process couldn’t keep up.

Inventory Transfers

RFgen offered Insitu three ways to transfer inventory quickly. The Location Transfer and Inventory Transfer transactions enable warehouse workers to move parts from one location to another simply by scanning. After hearing about how labor-intensive moving to a new warehouse had been for the Insitu team, the RFgen consultant made another suggestion—for a custom-developed Bin Swap transaction.

“RFgen suggested that a bin swap would be very handy from an optimization perspective. It gave us the ability to swap parts from one location to another. We can move everything to one location or swap two locations—all in one transaction,” Lorentz said. “We don’t have to scan individual parts. That is truly a labor-saving transaction. The actual time saved depends on how many parts are in the bin, but in general, it takes about 15 seconds to complete a bin swap versus 15-20 seconds for each part if we had to scan them individually.”

In the end, RFgen achieved all of Lorentz’s objectives and the deployment met her expectations in terms of budget and timing. But the best results came from users in the warehouse.



“Our subject matter experts who conducted internal training brought some of the employees to give me feedback personally,” said Lorentz. “Our warehouse employees love RFgen because it’s easy to use. The forms were well designed, with the user in mind. RFgen worked very, very hard and they were very responsive to see it through to success. Even the project’s biggest skeptic told me ‘I love barcoding’ after we deployed RFgen.”

About RFgen Software

RFgen Software helps organizations reduce supply chain implementation costs and increase accuracy and efficiency with the industry’s most reliable and flexible mobile data collection software and supply chain automation solutions.

Enabling you to increase productivity by providing your mobile workforce with real-time and on-demand access to enterprise data, RFgen’s mobile data collection solutions easily connect Windows, Android and Apple iOS mobile devices like barcode scanners, tablets, handheld computers, voice recognition devices and more to your back office ERP systems and databases, including Oracle’s JD Edwards, Oracle E-Business Suite, SAP, SAP Business One, Deltek Costpoint and more.

In business since 1983, RFgen is known in the manufacturing and distribution industries for its solid, high-quality products and high customer satisfaction ratings among its more than 2,800 customers. With a global reach and local touch, RFgen and its network of more than 140 certified solution partners can support your organization no matter where your operations are located around the world.

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