Toyota Canada

Toyota Canada Yard Management System.

At a glance...

Industry
Auto Manufacturing

Application
Yard Management System

Toyota Canada began discussions with Ahearn and Soper Inc. in 2005 regarding the updating of their vehicle processing systems and operational procedures to match the company's projected growth curve for the future. One of their Vehicle Processing Centres (VPC) was to receive a new state-of-the-art building facility and required new technology to compliment and enhance the new way of processing vehicles. Toyota recognized processing vehicles individually during the rail off loading process, instead of in batch as they were currently, would provide efficiencies and improve operational throughput while at the same time enhance customer service for both consumers and their dealer network.

Ahearn & Soper worked collaboratively with Toyota in designing a Yard Management System (YMS) that included the following:

- Rugged mobile technology from LXE connected to the RFgen software
- The use of wireless technology for their 300,000 square foot property
- RFID technology to track processing stages of the vehicle received into the yard and through the processing centre
- Automated printing functions and parts allocation
- An administrative console for reporting, system set-up and planning
- A backend system integration with their current vehicle processing system on the mainframe
- Encapsulated, reusable RFID tags

In brief, inbound vehicles still in transit to the VPC from the manufacturing plants, are pre-loaded into the Ahearn & Soper supplied system. VPC operations use this data to perform capacity analysis, pre-sort planning and parts ordering, etc.

When a vehicle arrives, a mobile device connected to RFgen validates and receives it, inspects it and directs it to its first point of rest (FPOR) in the yard. The RFgen application updates the solution database and assigns an Ahearn & Soper designed and built RFID tag to the vehicle which is used in the next stages of the process. As each vehicle arrives at the processing building, the RFID tag triggers various readers throughout the facility as to what the vehicles next steps are.

These steps include:

- Printing new vehicle information forms
- Vehicle option parts allocation
- Vehicle option installation work order tracking
- Vehicle yard placement

Throughout the above steps, the YMS updates the backend system with a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) status change in near real time. When a vehicle reaches its last point of rest in the yard, Carriers are notified it is ready for pick up and delivery.

The project began October 11, 2005. By November 2006, the new VPC was fully operational using the Ahearn & Soper supplied solution, with a second site installed in December 2007.

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