

HORIZON HOBBY CASE STUDY

Case Study

**JERRY WRIGHT,
HORIZON HOBBY
DISTRIBUTION
SYSTEMS ANALYST:**

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Honeywell

BACKGROUND

For 35 years, Horizon Hobby has been helping people have fun with hobbies. Thanks to their technological innovations, those that have never experienced the joy of flying an aircraft or driving a full-throttle truck, buggy, or boat can now do so with Horizon Hobby's full fleet of scale models. From shredding the pavement to soaring the sky, they make radio control adventures available for everyone, from the seasoned enthusiast to the new beginner. Starting from humble beginnings in a basement in 1985, they have grown into a global industry leader. Horizon Hobby takes their mission of helping people have fun with hobbies seriously.

BUSINESS NEEDS

Since entering the radio control hobby industry, Horizon Hobby's customer demand has increased exponentially. Additionally, the recent global health crisis forced many to stay at home and discover new hobbies, like radio control scale models, which compounded the demand on their business.

Based in Champaign, Illinois, with distribution centers in Illinois and California, they needed a way to optimize their distribution centers and picking operations to keep up with their eager customer base. Their previous solution was to program Raspberry Pi single-board computers and attach them to carts for their picking operations. These were then paired with consumer-grade ring scanners, which helped the pickers pick SKUs for orders. While the solution worked, Horizon Hobby found that the consumer-grade devices weren't rugged enough to endure drops and dust or dirt and had short lifecycles. Horizon Hobby required a comprehensive technological solution that fit the needs of their growing global enterprise.



They were also using older Honeywell legacy LXE handheld devices which were no longer supported and were scheduled to reach their end of life.

SOLUTION

Horizon Hobby selected the Honeywell CK65 mobile computer for their distribution center operations and further secured their investment with the Honeywell Operational Intelligence software offering.

In their cartonized warehouse operations, Horizon Hobby pickers must navigate through nearly 30,000 SKUs on the warehouse floor. When using the Honeywell LXE devices, warehouse workers were experiencing degraded battery performance and needed to change the batteries multiple times per shift. Additionally, the support team was pulled in frequently to address different problems with the consumer-grade ring scanners and single-board computers. Horizon Hobby's proprietary solution also led to network communication gaps, further compounding worker and support team frustrations.

The CK65 mobile computer was an ideal solution to replace Horizon Hobby's proprietary device deployment. The CK65 is designed to boost supply chain productivity by accelerating and error-proofing work in distribution centers and manufacturing. Offering the longest supported lifecycle available, up to 28-hour battery life, and best-in-class ruggedness, the CK65 maximizes productive uptime, while providing an easy path for users migrating to the Android platform. It is a durable, secure and versatile mobile computer that offers enhanced

1D/2D scanning and data capture for short, mid, or long-range workflows.

The CK65 helped Horizon Hobby workers pick through SKUs with enhanced inventory accuracy and increased productivity. Ultimately, the CK65 helped Horizon Hobby step into the modern warehouse environment, according to Horizon Hobby Distribution Systems Analyst Jerry Wright.

"Because of the [CK65's] reliability and extended battery life, our pickers no longer have to change their batteries three to four times a day like they used to. They helped increase our productivity which allows us to serve our customers better. As things get busier, these devices are performing flawlessly."

- JERRY WRIGHT,

HORIZON HOBBY DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM ANALYST

Horizon Hobby also opted to manage their deployed devices with real-time line-of-sight through the Operational Intelligence software offering. Operational Intelligence allows Horizon Hobby to have intelligent visibility into its devices and workflows, giving them the opportunity to proactively address inefficiencies and identify solutions to challenges they didn't foresee. Operational Intelligence provides Horizon Hobby the capability to reduce the total cost of ownership of their devices and secure their investment.

With Operational Intelligence, Horizon Hobby can now monitor their deployed devices and send out configurations

QUICK FACTS

Honeywell Solution

Honeywell Products list: Honeywell CK65 Mobile Computer, Honeywell Operational Intelligence

- **Customer:** Horizon Hobby
- **Location:** Champaign, Illinois, United States
- **Industry:** Retail/DC
- **Website:** www.horizonhobby.com

Customer Results

- Decreased device downtime due to longer battery life, remote updating
- Increased worker productivity in order picking
- Replaced proprietary solution prone to complications with connected, enterprise-grade devices

Why Choose Honeywell

- Provided premium hardware and software solutions
- Improved device performance/accidental damage coverage
- Operational Intelligence for better remote device support

and updates remotely from a centralized location. Whereas before, they would have to physically update each computer or fix a problem with an interface.

"We can push updates online, minimizing downtime and access the user's screen when they are having trouble, and we can see what the user is looking at. We can also tweak the devices to what the users want. After initial rollout, the DC came back and asked to adjust the volume and brightness on their devices, and we were able to do that without physically touching the devices," Wright said.



RESULTS:

Overall, deployment of the Honeywell solutions took about seven months. Horizon Hobby users were able to quickly adapt to the new handheld mobile computers, and the support team made significant gains in device analytics and management with Operational Intelligence. Now, user frustration with their devices has decreased and their ability to quickly fulfil orders and send them along to packing and manifest stations has increased.

"That's where Honeywell helps us, by giving us a reliable device, which, in turn, helps us help our customers," Wright said.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE:

Horizon Hobby is currently enjoying the benefits from their newly deployed solutions. In the future, the availability of the new Honeywell ring scanner will help Horizon Hobby replace the consumer-grade ring scanners they are currently using. This will allow them to increase their workers picking efficiency and comfort, and they will be able to have a unified Honeywell solution to help optimize and automate their workflows.



For more information

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