



Case Study:

Retail Distribution: Lakeland

The Company

As one of the UK's home shopping pioneers, Lakeland is one of the leading names in kitchenware and home ware products.

Founded by Alan Rayner in the 1960's, Lakeland have grown to become one of the UK's most respected family run retail businesses. From selling freezer bags at the farm gate in the 1960's to managing a growing number of retail outlets, their success has continued with a rapid growth in online sales as they help customers make the most of their time at home.



The Role of RF

Lakeland attributes the ongoing success of the company to following the simple philosophy, *"always look after the customer and the business will look after itself"*. Indeed, Lakeland remain extremely customer orientated and pride themselves on setting themselves apart from the rest with their friendly, speedy, personalised service and modern, welcoming retail stores.

The optimised running of their Kendal distribution centre has been fundamental in maintaining this philosophy. The installation of their first RF system in 1996 enabled real time visibility of their warehouse, their stock levels, and processes. The technology had been implemented within various departments throughout their general warehousing/picking operation, helping them to optimise the many processes such as put away, picking and replenishment.

As the business continued to grow, further upgrades were made to the system to ensure they continued to operate effectively with minimal error and cost to the organisation.



Maintaining High Standards

Since the initial system was installed, the Kendal based warehouse operation now manages the distribution for over 60 stores nationwide as well as fulfilling customer orders placed through their website and over the phone. In recent years, Lakeland have seen significant growth in the e-commerce sector and combined with their mail order business, they now distribute thousands of parcels a day via their direct despatch operation. Lakeland fully understands and appreciate the effectiveness of their RF system and like to source the most up-to-date systems and radio data terminals.

Commenting on the effectiveness of the system Alex Rea, Systems Manager for Lakeland says, ***"The benefit of the system means that we always have real-time information to hand on every facet of the operation such as allocated tasks and stock location. All this information helps provide our customer with a speedy and responsive service which is critical in ensuring our customers have a great shopping experience"***.

Facing an even faster turnaround and the continued challenge of maintaining reliable, streamlined operations, Lakeland once more turned to TouchStar Technologies for a mobile computing solution.

The Solution

The new project extends the successful relationship with TouchStar which now spans over 15 years.

Alex continues, ***"TouchStar devices had proved themselves inherently reliable within our operating environment, over a significant number of years. We know TouchStar install quality systems so, recognising it was time for a hardware refresh, it made sense to start talking to them about how we could move on to a future proof system"***.

Working together with TouchStar to select the best solution for their warehouse, Lakeland selected their **TS7200** truck mounted terminals. The devices combine high impact polycarbonate plastics, metal alloy chassis and the use of Sorbothane® rubber shock absorbers to provide an extremely reliable solution and prolonged life within Lakelands robust warehouse environment. With high-definition graphics and keyboard the **TS7200** also provided outstanding readability. The integration of a fully capacitive QWERTY keyboard also meant that Lakeland benefited from an easy to use, robust wipeable touchscreen with its large keys perfect for their data entry applications.

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Ongoing Success

As Lakeland continue to grow, the upgrade has provided Lakeland with the confidence that they are able to maintain the high service levels that they are renowned for.

Alex continues, ***"The new hardware has enabled us to maintain efficient warehouse processes. The availability of accurate real time stock movement updates means we have 100% confidence that all stock information is right up-to-date. With TouchStar we have enjoyed excellent local support, so downtime is minimal, and our operations are more cost effective"***.

Lakeland is excited by the potential that radio frequency technology offers about further process improvements. This potential has already been fully realised in key areas of the business and continues to help Lakeland deliver unsurpassable customer service levels and secure tangible operational improvements.

