



Case Study:

Food Manufacture and Distribution: P&B Foods

The Company

“King in Quality, King in Taste”, P&B (Foods) Ltd are a well-established food distribution company. Starting out in 1970, the family run company has gone from strength to strength and is now firmly positioned as one of the largest importers and wholesale distributors operating within the ethnic and oriental markets of the UK and Europe.

P&B manufactures, processes, packs and distributes a wide range of food products from their purpose-built facility based in Bradford, West Yorkshire. Their customers range from retailers, wholesalers, food service suppliers and the large multiples.



Commitment to Sustainable Growth

In 2016 P&B moved to a custom built 200,000 sq ft, state of the art facility comprising of a roasting plant, two spice mills, a blending plant and high-speed packing lines. The new premises represented a doubling in size of the company's potential operations.

Indie Bhatoa, Owner at P&B Foods comments, **“Having made the jump from 80,000 sq ft facilities to a 200,000 sq ft state of the art facility, we knew we had to make the investment in the IT infrastructure that would help sustainably manage our growth. Ensuring that we have an efficient and streamlined supply chain in place is fundamental, we needed to ensure that we continued to provide a reliable and cost-effective service to all our UK and European based customers. We knew that real time data capture would offer the solution”.**

Facing continued growth in capacity and throughput, the business turned to TouchStar Rugged Mobile Computers to facilitate real time benefits within their Bradford based Headquarters.



“TouchStar provided a competitively priced and fully supported solution. In selecting TouchStar, we were able to ensure we had access to both local and flexible support so that we can operate efficiently and with minimal downtime”.

Indie Bhatoa, Owner at P&B Foods



The Solution

As a business, P&B recognised the value that data capture could bring to their expanded operations. Previously a paper-based system, the business was looking to achieve several things from the roll out of such a system, from real time visibility of pallet and stock movements, through to increasing the efficiency of their picking operations and ensuring better management of operations such as stock rotation.

Integrating rugged data capture hardware alongside a new warehouse management system was to play a key role in refining several processes within their newly developed operations. To fulfil the hardware requirement, P&B selected local rugged mobile computer and scanning specialists, TouchStar, selecting their fit for purpose **TS8000** handhelds and **TS7000** truck mount devices for the system. Rugged and reliable, both devices fulfilled P&B's requirements for high-speed scanning and data capture.

The system needed to be both future proof and scalable, with the rugged devices seamlessly integrating with their core warehouse management system (WMS) to scan, track and manage goods throughout the various warehouse and production processes, predominantly the goods in, picking and despatch functions. To facilitate the real time data capture, TouchStar needed to ensure full connectivity with P&B's newly installed Wi-Fi network.

Implementation and Go Live

The implementation phase took 6 weeks from start to finish, with TouchStar engineers on hand to check device compatibility with the new WMS and connectivity to the new Wi-Fi network.

Indie continues, *“We did experience a few challenges during the implementation phase, however TouchStar were on hand throughout, providing their experience and solutions to ensure we overcame our connectivity issues. We were really impressed with their positive “can do” attitude which was invaluable as we moved towards the go live of our new system”.*

System Benefits and Outcome

Since the go live, P&B Foods has become a clear success story of how organisations in the food manufacture and distribution sector continue to benefit from the support of advanced warehouse scanning solutions.

The Future

Following the implementation, P&B continue to grow their operations. Boosting their manufacturing operations is key to the growth and futureproofing of their operations, more recently with the construction of a 75,000 sq ft extension to their Bradford site. The addition of a new 100,000 sq ft site in Ireland will also be adding additional support for their European operations.

Alongside the growth, additional investment in TouchStar and its mobile computing technology has now been put in place with P&B upgrading their existing windows scanners to TouchStar’s latest **TS8200** android handheld with additional plans in place to upgrade to TouchStar’s latest android truck mount devices thereafter.

With the new directions the business is taking, P&B continue to evolve and develop their operations having confidence that the technology they have invested in will continue to meet the business’s needs both now and into the future.

“We have no doubt of the benefits brought about since the implementation of TouchStar’s scanners, the system has literally revolutionised our operation. From an efficiency perspective, we have increased productivity threefold, particularly within our picking function. The real time element has also enabled us to optimise our operations from an efficiency, accuracy and cost perspective. Investing in UK manufactured, and locally supported devices has ensured that we maintain high service levels and we have huge confidence in TouchStar and the support they have given us. The investment has 100% paid for itself and we would highly recommend TouchStar to anyone looking to invest in data capture technology”.

Indie Bhatia, Owner at P&B Foods



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