

# HHP helps Alstons to take stock of it's furniture

**Stock taking can be a time-consuming and frustrating activity for any company. However, furniture manufacturer Alstons has developed an ideal solution, based on the use of Dolphin® 7200 mobile computers from HHP.**

Alstons is a family owned manufacturer of bedroom and upholstered furniture. The company has two sites, one dedicated to upholstered furniture and the other to cabinet furniture, primarily for the bedroom. The new HHP system has been introduced at the cabinet site.

Malcolm Curtis, Management Services Manager for Alstons, explains: "The new system is the result of a project I conducted with our Production Controller, Paul Partridge. After introducing a new MRP system three years ago, we found that we didn't have an efficient way of counting our finished goods stock. As a result, the quarterly stock take took 15 people all weekend to complete! The results were still inaccurate, and Paul would spend the following week resolving various issues.

"We therefore started looking for a suitable data collection system. We needed a solution that would enable us to reduce the length of the stock take, and would provide us with a set of accurate data. We also wanted a reliable product that could withstand the rigours of industrial situations. After looking at various options, we felt that HHP's Dolphin® 7200 was the best solution. The supplier, Codeway, was also nearby, and this ensured a very rapid back-up service."



The Dolphin® 7200 is a hand held bar code scanner that can read all popular linear barcodes. It is light and compact and extremely rugged, and is produced in both batch and RF formats. Alstons initially purchased five Dolphins for the stock taking of finished goods. The units were supplied by Codeway, one of HHP's Power Partners, who also developed the software that would be used by Alstons.



Malcolm Curtis continues: "After the initial introduction of the Dolphins, we were surprised by how quickly and accurately we could carry out stock takes. We download the data onto a PC and create a file which is used to update a report programme in our MRP system. We subsequently purchased three more Dolphins, and introduced a WIP stock take programme. This was used successfully at our recent 'end of year' stock take, with similar time savings as for our finished goods."

He adds: "The Dolphins have proved to be as reliable as we had hoped, although initially we encountered problems with the battery packs retaining their charge. This was resolved by purchasing a multi charger unit and ensuring that all batteries are well charged prior to the stock take. The users of the system are very enthusiastic, and we expect to purchase another two or three units in the next few months."



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