



## Tech Pacific rely on the latest wireless technology to provide the very best service

One of the busiest and biggest distribution centres in Australia is operated by Tech Pacific Australia Pty Limited which is part of the Tech Pacific Group, the leading supplier of computers and IT related equipment in the Asia Pacific region. They rely heavily on their wireless RF system to ensure they maintain their 24-hour order turnaround KPI - a task that has been made easier now that they are using state-of-the-art scanners to handle 85% of the work in the warehouse.

The Falcon 345 wireless scanners manufactured by PSC Asia Pacific are part of the RF system that was installed by Bar Code Data Systems (BCDS), which also includes 10 Cisco access points. The resulting improvements in productivity, efficiency, accuracy and customer satisfaction are described by Tech Pacific's National Operations Manager, Mr Simon Kacimawai as dramatic.

Covering 24,800 square metres this distribution centre (DC) has 7 metre high racking holding a total of 22,000 SKU's; 9,000 of which are active. There are 16,000 bulk locations and 6,000 bin locations and they average 16,000 picks each day.

Tech Pacific is a Microsoft preferred distributor and also distribute for Toshiba, Epson and other leading manufacturers of IT equipment. 30% of their customer list of six thousand five hundred include Australia's leading retailers such as the Myers Group, Harvey Norman, Dick Smith,



Big W and Retravision who are constantly replenishing stock to cater to the ever-increasing demand for IT equipment.

Testament to Tech Pacific's distribution success are several awards including being voted IT Distributor of the Year by the IT market in general, IT Distributor of the year by both Toshiba and Microsoft and, at the other end of the supply chain, they were voted supplier of the Year by both Harvey Norman and Leading Edge. This DC is very efficiently operated and busily receiving and despatching from 6.00am to 12 mid night 5 days a week.

On a normal day, they receive 300 to 400 pallets a day and process between 3,500 and 4,500 orders daily despatching around 14,000 cartons and 2,000 jiffy bags that fill five semi-trailers. At peak times these numbers can double! The demands on this DC are huge.

The new system has enabled Tech Pacific to increase productivity by 150% and to reduce picking errors by 50%. Improvements that are crucial as Tech Pacific anticipate a 30% growth in volume by the end of the 2004/2005 financial-year. It is essential that the equipment they use is able to handle these increasing demands and is totally reliable.

"Our level of activity is intense," said Mr Danny Wilson, Tech Pacific's Infrastructure Support Analyst, who managed the equipment upgrade. "The equipment had to not only have the capability of meeting our needs today, we had to be confident it would also cater for our future needs. Also, we wanted to work with a supplier who was prepared to remain beside us, supporting us wherever and whenever necessary. We've found this in BCDS."

Tech Pacific already had a relationship with BCDS who have been supplying them with scanners

Bar Code Data Systems





and other hardware for a number of years. However, while this relationship was strong they still went through a rigorous selection process before finally choosing BCDS to handle the equipment upgrade.

One of the main reasons for going through this procedure was that Tech Pacific are recognised as the largest user of RF equipment in Australia, in one location, having a total of 110 active RF units. It took a 9-month testing phase of the various units and suppliers before BCDS were selected.

"BCDS were very thorough in the pre sale process, conducting an extensive RF site survey to guarantee radio coverage throughout the site before making recommendations. They were then able to identify the best scanner for our needs and demonstrated a willingness to work closely with us," Mr Wilson said. "BCDS have been outstanding and we're delighted to be associated with them."

Pricing and service was high in the selection criteria as was a requirement for Tech Pacific to have 98% uptime with their RF infrastructure, which BCDS proved they could manage. BCDS also, as part of the maintenance agreement, agreed to hold a stock of

spare scanners and committed to a 2-day scanner service turnaround. They also offered a flexible training program to suit Tech Pacific's requirements for a 'train the trainer' approach.

The 802.11b, 2.4GHz Cisco access points, which are strategically located around the warehouse to provide uninterrupted and secure RF communication between the scanners and Tech Pacific's MARC warehouse management system, are the latest technology with direct sequencing and open system architecture. The entire system is scaleable and upgradeable ensuring Tech Pacific are not locked into a single hardware manufacturer should they wish to add other equipment.

In selecting scanners occupational health and safety issues were a consideration. "The scanners had to be ergonomically sound as our warehouse staff use them all day", explained Mr Wilson. "We looked at weight, balance, laser emissions and screen readability."

Staff confirmed that they find the scanners lightweight and they are impressed with the ease with which the PSC Falcon 345 picks up serial numbers from as far away as 2 metres. "They scan really well," one of the picker's commented. "And the screens are easy

to read." This is reflected in the picking accuracy improvements. Tech Pacific is quality assurance (QA) conscientious and their MARC warehouse management system will detect any discrepancies. For instance, if a picked carton does not match the weight it should, it is diverted along a conveyor belt to the QA area where the problem can be corrected.

The scanners are utilised for receiving, putaway, picking, checking and QA. They do a lot of work!

The new system was seamlessly integrated into the old system running parallel with it initially and while there were some teething problems these were soon fixed. "BCDS were diligent in solving any issues we had, spending hours on site checking and rechecking until they found the solution," Mr Wilson said.

Mr Kacimawai confirmed these positive words saying that he was very happy with the new equipment. "Its great to work with a supplier who responds so well to any issues we may have. BCDS have proved reliable. They demonstrate a real appreciation of the timely nature of our business and this is reflected in the way they work with us." ■

**BCDS**  
Bar Code Data Systems

## Bar Code Data Systems Pty Ltd

(ABN 65 002 370 452)

Unit 24, 10 Yalgar Road, Kirrawee NSW 2232, Australia

Tel: (02) 8536 1000 Fax: (02) 8536 1001

Email: [sales@bcds.com.au](mailto:sales@bcds.com.au) Web: [www.bcds.com.au](http://www.bcds.com.au)