



CASE STUDY: Goodwill

GOODWILL OF NORTH GEORGIA DELIVERS HIGH QUALITY OF SERVICE WITH RIMS

Established locally in 1925, Goodwill Industries of North Georgia provides janitorial services, grounds maintenance & operations, maintenance of mechanical systems, and supply chain management services using the RIMS warehouse management system (WMS) from Robocom. The organization's mission is to put people to work. Currently, Goodwill Industries of North Georgia employs 360 employees, and its organization provides building maintenance services for 4.1 million square feet of building space each day.

Goodwill was recently awarded a new contract to operate a distribution facility for a federal agency under the AbilityOne Program. AbilityOne provides employment opportunities to more than 40,000 people and is the largest single provider of jobs for people who are blind or have other severe disabilities in the United States.

Goodwill manages all of the agency's office moves. Any shipments to the agency's campus are first shipped to Goodwill's warehouse. Upon delivery to the warehouse, the staff scans and enters information about each package into the web-based RIMS system. This allows each customer to track their goods, in real time, through each step of the process until they receive their shipment.

When Goodwill took on the new contract, it also inherited the existing WMS. Elaine Armstrong, Vice President of Marketing for Goodwill Industries of North Georgia, says the system had a number of weaknesses, including an inability to integrate with other systems and a lack of real-time supply chain visibility.

"When you are working with federal clients, you will inevitably handle highly sensitive materials. So it is imperative that we are able to track those packages and know exactly where they are at any given point in the supply chain. In fact, that was one of the key requirements of our government customer – that we provide them with real-time tracking."

CHOOSING RIMS

To satisfy its customer's requirement for visibility and to ensure high quality of service, Goodwill replaced its existing WMS and implemented RIMS. Jerry Hise, Goodwill Vice President of Facility Services, explains, "After a careful review, RIMS was selected to help Goodwill Industries increase their warehouse accuracy and efficiency which will enable Goodwill to outperform the incumbent company from which Goodwill took over the operation.

SOLUTION SNAPSHOT

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Goodwill needed the ability to track goods through each step of the supply chain to meet its federal clients' strict requirements for real-time visibility and high quality of service.

ROBOCOM SOLUTION

The organization chose Robocom's RIMS warehouse management solution to implement the controls, process and discipline required to streamline and optimize its warehouse management operations.

RESULTS

With RIMS and the use of barcode scanners, parcels are tracked at each point in the supply chain, ensuring accuracy and traceability across the entire digital chain of custody – particularly critical because Goodwill often handles highly sensitive materials.

“Robocom’s tracking system is extremely accurate and able to quickly and easily adapt to changes and evolving packaging code requirements. RIMS enables us to maintain the high level of quality and detail we strive for every day.”

*— Elaine Armstrong
Vice President of Marketing
Goodwill Industries
of North Georgia*

Robocom has been highly responsive to our needs and we believe they will be a strong partner with us going forward.”

To ensure efficient, accurate and streamlined operations, Goodwill relies on RIMS to manage three key functions:

Package Tracking – The RIMS web-based package tracking system allows Goodwill’s customers to track their goods from the point of items being pulled from stock to delivery. Order pullers, shipping and receiving clerks, drivers and couriers all utilize scanners with cellular connectivity, which provides “real-time tracking” of goods.

Distribution – Goodwill has the capability to receive, store, and deliver goods to end users, as the goods are needed.

Inventory Management – Goodwill uses RIMS for tracking inventory in the warehouse. When items are received, their unique identifier are scanned and RIMS automatically assigns a barcoded location within the warehouse to store the goods. The item is scanned to the assigned location until an order is received from an end user for the item.

ACCESSIBILITY

Goodwill requires that the warehouse management solution complies with Federal regulations known as Section 508 – a set of Federal regulations that require Federal agencies’ electronic and information technology to be accessible to people with disabilities. Goodwill is utilizing RIMS in concert with an innovative application of hand held devices to track and trace package delivery from point of receipt at the warehouse straight through to delivery to the end user.

“The majority of our employees are severely disabled and they find the RIMS and the support accessories easy to navigate,” explains Armstrong. “Also, the Robocom support team has been very quick to respond to any of our service requests.”

REAL-TIME TRACKING

The federal agency Goodwill serves operates across a large campus with thousands of employees, from administrators to scientists. A large volume of parcels is delivered to the campus daily, including office supplies, furniture and even chemicals for the labs. The campus maintains high security protocols, including a wall around the campus perimeter. Goodwill’s delivery trucks must unload packages at a specific side of the campus, outside of the wall. A federal employee then transfers the parcels to a cart for transport to the various offices.

To maintain security, there is no cellular coverage on the campus. Prior to using RIMS, the digital chain of custody could only be tracked up to the point that Goodwill delivered the parcel at the security checkpoint. After that, there was no real-time visibility into where a package was or digital proof of receipt.

Today with RIMS and the use of barcode scanners, parcels are tracked at each point in the supply chain – from the moment it leaves the warehouse or vendor to the moment the recipient signs for the parcel. This process not only enables the recipient to track their package, but it also significantly reduces the chances of a parcel being mistakenly delivered to the wrong person.

“Robocom’s tracking system is extremely accurate and able to quickly and easily adapt to changes and evolving packaging code requirements. RIMS enables us to maintain the high level of quality and detail we strive for every day,” says Armstrong.

RIMS also offers a customer portal that optimizes communication and improves customer satisfaction. “The customer portal makes it simple for employees of our federal customer to track their own packages or initiate a new shipment request.” For example, if an employee is moving to another office and needs assistance or requires new materials, they can put a request into the system. Goodwill also supports outbound shipments as well as shipments between campus locations.

ROBOCOM: INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE

Armstrong says Goodwill values Robocom’s deep experience and expertise in distribution and logistics. “It is a significant advantage that we are able to work with a vendor that has such a depth of knowledge. If we have any questions, Robocom is always there to provide us with advice and guidance so we can continue to optimize our processes and ensure a positive customer experience. Because maintaining that high quality of service means we can deliver on our true mission which is to put people to work.”

ABOUT GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF NORTH GEORGIA

Established locally in 1925, Goodwill Industries of North Georgia is a 501 (c) (3) organization. Our organization has been in the janitorial business since 1982, and in 1996 we began offering facilities management services to customers across the region. Currently, Goodwill employs 360 employees and our organization provides building maintenance services for 4.1 million square feet of building space each day. For more information go to: www.Goodwillfacilityservices.org

ABOUT ROBOCOM SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL

Robocom Systems develops, licenses and supports Supply Chain Execution software solutions, including Warehouse Management, 3PL Billing, Transportation Management, Voice Technology and Labor Management. An Enterprise Transportation System and Enterprise Resource Planning System round out the Supply Chain Execution offering. Robocom’s investment in research and development is keenly focused on the needs of the business leaders responsible for the day-to-day results in warehousing, distribution, third party logistics, transportation and trucking operations. For more information visit www.robocom.com

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