



St. George, Utah powers its warehouse with solutions from Zebra

Industry

Government: Utility, Warehousing

Challenge

Optimize inventory management and create sleeker workflows

Solution

- Zebra MC3300 mobile computer
- Radley Warehouse Management Software
- Cityworks Storeroom

Results

- Supported 98% reliability in delivering utilities with minimal outages
- Achieved nearly 90% return on investment through time savings in under 30 months
- Saved 20 hours a week of data entry and delivered an 80% time savings on inventory tasks

Leveraging Radley Warehouse Management Software and Cityworks Storeroom on Zebra MC3300 mobile computers boosts productivity and reduces costs for the city's utility department.

With idyllic scenery and a beautiful climate, St. George, Utah attracts a steadily growing population of transplants along with its fair share of seasonal tourists. As a result, St. George is one of the fastest growing cities in the U.S. and Utah's seventh-largest city.

This steady population growth poses a challenge to the city's utility department, which provides electric service to approximately 31,800

residential and commercial customers. To keep up with increasing demand on its power grid, St. George turned to Zebra Technologies and Radley to find unique digital solutions to better manage resources and optimize workflows in its warehouse.

Of the city's departments, St. George Energy Services Department (SGESD) spends the most on materials and equipment. It's responsible for purchasing a wide range of items ranging from fuses and power poles to substation transformers, adding up to over \$1 million dollars in value. For this reason alone, tracking every asset is critical. Before SGESD's digital transformation, it relied on paper, pens and clipboards to manage inventory.

In searching for a solution that could handle more complex workflows, the city initially adopted a homegrown solution that acted as a digital clipboard.

Working with Radley, St. George selected a combination of Zebra MC3300 mobile computers and a Radley integration to Cityworks Storeroom for its automation needs. Since the device and software rollout, the department has realized substantial cost savings, boosted productivity, and vastly improved the inventory management experience.

Shopping Experience in the Warehouse

Manual systems can't provide the inventory visibility necessary to operate at the highest possible level of productivity and accuracy. SGESD's goal was to turn its warehouse into a supermarket-inspired experience, where workers come in, scan what they need and check out as smoothly as possible. With the addition of barcoding and Zebra mobile computers, it's achieved this goal.

The SGESD system is powered by Cityworks, a platform designed to bring together tools and software to enable easier sharing and increased efficiency both within and outside the warehouse environment. St. George uses the Cityworks APIs to build a web page that holds a QR code for every active work order for the warehouse. Crew superintendents digitally assign work orders, which makes it easy for employees to identify tasks. Every component piece is barcoded for seamless tracking and tracing. Workers simply scan their work orders and are guided, via the Zebra devices, to the correct equipment and materials needed for each job. Crew members then scan the materials they need and keep track of what was used. For example, if a lineman brings out eight parts but only ends up using five, that detail gets recorded and inventory levels are updated.

Or, if an electric meter breaks, workers can access the information related to that product and quickly pull the parts needed for repairs. Scanning a barcode, rather than manually typing in a name or identification number, eliminates input errors. Automated tracking also helps the department deliver timely repairs and identify potential problems before they arise.

Intuitive, Efficient and Rugged

When developing a digital strategy and investing in a fleet of new devices for the city of St. George, it was most important to consider the needs and preferences of workers who ultimately carry them in their hands. In the case of SGESD, which boasts a staff of around 60 people, that means line staff, substation techs, SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) operators and other skilled workers out in the field.

The energy department's workers possess highly specialized skill sets and don't have time to waste learning laborious processes to collect the equipment they need for every job. To successfully onboard employees onto a new tech platform, Dial approached it by considering the end-user from the very beginning. "If the person using the device finds it annoying, it's probably not going to succeed," says Dial. "That was a big reason why we chose the Zebra device. Team members can just pick it up, make a few scans, hit one button, and they're done."

Combined with the functionality of the Zebra devices, Radley's user-friendly interface has helped facilitate easy adoption. With a simple scan, Radley runs in the background automatically updating the Cityworks system with real-time inventory data. Keeping accurate track of inventory is a significant cost and time saver for SGESD. The system has enabled increased cycle counting, which was previously too time-consuming to achieve, helping to complete inventory operations without shutting down warehouse operations.

Compared to manual inventory processes, automated solutions provide increased accuracy that is less vulnerable to human error. As a city government, St. George faces numerous regulatory requirements for auditing. In the past, audits could take weeks, tying up the workforce and slowing down productivity. The new barcode scanning system allows the team to complete audits automatically, without any printed lists or time wasted. According to Dial, the new system requires a quarter of the time it did before to complete an audit.

With a climate similar to that of Las Vegas, workers in St. George must be ready to handle extreme heat and dry weather – and so do their devices. After considering consumer-grade technologies, SGESD determined that Zebra's rugged devices provide the exemplary interface, scanning capabilities, and rugged reliability necessary to complete the job. "The Zebra devices have proven reliable 100% of the time," Dial says. "Everything works even if it's dusty, gets dropped or if it's scorching hot."

Zebra Devices Provided by Radley

Finding the right partners was key to the SGESD digital transformation strategy. In a large department within the city's entire ecosystem, workflows are rarely linear enough to use just a single tool. To gain an even better return on its investment into Cityworks Storeroom, St. George wanted to deploy a single mobile solution to integrate into the existing platform for added visibility.

According to Dial, finding a software solution provider and Zebra reseller in Radley provided the missing link to bring all the department's various workflows together. "The Radley team has been supportive every step of the way," says Dial. "Having to do a number of updates and work with different vendors, it's nice to work with people who are responsive and get the job done."



“In under two and a half years, we’ve recovered almost 90% of our costs for this already, and that’s just in saved time. The new system has also saved 20 hours a week of data entry and delivered an 80% time savings related to inventory.”

Bryan Dial
SGESD Energy Resource Manager

The Future is Bright

As the city of St. George grows, the citizens' expectations for service will too. The innovative approach to modernization is enabling SGESD to deliver a 98% reliability rate—with minimal outages—and its employees can respond faster to issues.

Dial attributes SGESD's success in part to the seamless integration of team members and vendor partners informing the city's inventory and workflow management system. "The best solution is a holistic solution," says Dial. "Have all the right people there so you can solve problems sooner rather than later."