

Fred Meyer Uses *Wireless to Improve Yard Productivity and Reduce Costs*

CASE STUDY

FRED MEYER, the nation's third largest super center operator, reduced their costs and improved their productivity using LXE's MX3-CE dual handheld/vehicle-mount computers and LXE's VX4 vehicle-mount computers to keep track of the hundreds of trailers going in and out of their distribution centers each day.



As the nation's third largest super center operator, Fred Meyer distributes food, apparel, and general merchandise to retail locations throughout the western United States. Deploying their trucks, as well as owner/operator trucks, Fred Meyer delivers product to retail stores that carry over 225,000 products and range in size from 130,000 - 200,000 square feet. As a result, hundreds of trailers go in and out of the distribution centers each day.

The daily management of these trailers caused serious logistical and management problems. Too many manhours were spent locating trailers using paper records. Additionally, the lack of real-time container information caused trailers to be moved unnecessarily, which drove up costs and shipping errors. Fred Meyer needed a wireless, real-time inventory management solution to track and manage gate operations and trailer locations.

The Solution

Fred Meyer selected LXE's MX3-CE and VX4 wireless computers and a Cisco 802.11b wireless infrastructure. This system automates the gate operations and trailer tracking in the yard. The MX3-CE handheld was chosen for its easy-to-read outdoor display. Management can now walk the yard with this computer, connect to the mainframe and gain instant shipping information.

For the hustlers who move trailers around the yard, Fred Meyer had the rugged Windows® VX4 vehicle-mount computer installed. The device can withstand excessive vibration and has a screen that is readable in both low and bright light. Now trailers are easily tracked and location changes are displayed on-screen.

The Results

- Trailer relocation has been reduced by 20%.
- Paper record keeping has been reduced by 30%.
- Virtually all errors have been eliminated and man-hours are down.

Now Fred Meyer knows where all trucks are located, what is coming in and where they are going, all with a touch of a button.

Key Learnings

Fred Meyer needed to connect two different host applications, a legacy 3270 application and a newer GUI application. To address this complex issue, LXE worked with Fred Meyer's operations to design the best solution. The MX3-CE with the Windows® CE operating system was subsequently chosen since this system offers the flexibility and adaptability to connect it all.

According to Jim Mcquinty, Project Manager of Fred Meyer, "The LXE devices performed with very few start up issues, and those issues were resolved quickly. We are currently very happy with the system."



About LXE Inc. LXE Inc. improves supply chain performance by applying over 30 years' experience developing wireless products and solutions. From wireless computers, advanced auto-ID technologies, and wireless network infrastructure, to our award-winning customer support - LXE's easy-to-use products are as reliable as the people who install and support them.

Based in Norcross, Georgia, LXE also offers a full range of turnkey services, including radio integration, project and installation management, network design, technical support, and repair services. LXE is a wholly-owned subsidiary of EMS Technologies, Inc. (NASDAQ: ELMG), and has offices worldwide. For more information, visit www.lxe.com.