

# Big savings, better control, improved customer service with wireless.

## CASE STUDY

**MATERIAL SCIENCES CORPORATION** (NYSE: MSC), a leading provider of material-based solutions for electronic, acoustical/thermal, and coated metal applications, improved inventory accuracy, reduced inventory write-offs and reduced costs with LXE wireless system and LXE handheld computers.



*Material Sciences Corporation needed a solution that enabled them to fulfill customer orders faster and more accurately than their current paper based system. Inventory counts were not always accurate, and it could take up to three days sometimes to locate a coil of steel. Weighing 30,000 lbs, an incorrectly shipped coil costs approximately \$1,500 to correct – not to mention the negative impact it had on the customer.*

### The Solution

MSC selected LXE's 900MHZ radio frequency technology to help remedy their problem. 900MHZ systems work well in high steel environment because of its superior ability to handle multi-pathing, which is a common occurrence in environments that have a high concentration of metal. MSC selected LXE's vertical handheld computer for several reasons:

- With the unit's docking station they were able to use one unit for two applications - mounting some on forklifts and outfitting others for mobile users with a shoulder style carrying case with tethered scanners. One unit for both applications made it easier to train end users.
- MSC was also able to display their application on the computer's screen without any code modifications, saving them thousands in additional programming costs.

### The Results

- Immediate reduction in time to locate inventory.
- Inventory accuracy has improved to 99.4%, and incorrect shipments have improved from 2-3 daily to 2-3 yearly. Inventory audits that were being conducted

- yearly are now only needed every 7 years.
- Improved inventory accuracy has eliminated the need to carry surplus emergency inventory.
- Material Sciences' yearly-lost inventory write-offs have been reduced from \$175K to \$4k.
- When fulfilling customer orders the assembly would have to be stopped to locate material. Now the assembly line only shuts down once a year for scheduled maintenance.
- Manpower has been reduced one per shift across all three shifts.
- Customers, which store inventory at Material Sciences locations, now rely on MSC's inventory numbers due to better records and accuracy. This represents a real added value for customers.

### Key Learnings

Time should be taken to properly bar code inventory at the onset of the project instead of bar coding as you go along.

Train the work force on the equipment ahead of time so that confidence is established from the beginning. This sets the proper expectations of what the system is capable of and promotes more acceptance of the system, which in turn, reduces the amount of user errors and misconceptions.

Also it is very important to select the correct partner for bar code automation because of all the unknowns. By selecting LXE, MSC took advantage of their 30 plus years of wireless data collection experience, which made the project flow much smoother.



**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](http://www.lxe.com).