



## Hulls Express Freight Streamlines with Symbol

Imagine handling thousands of documents every day - manually. That's what Hull's Express Freight did, and the process of tracking, tracing, and billing had turned into a logistical nightmare.

So the company decided to automate its parcel label generation and tracking using Symbol Technologies equipment - and the benefits in speed, accuracy and efficiency have paid off.

Gavin Richardson, IT manager at Hull's Express Freight, explains that the company started in 1989 as a wholesale company doing work for other courier companies. Since then it has grown to become one of the largest privately owned networks using its own vehicles in South Africa. The company has branches throughout the country, and also offers services to Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana.

Richardson points out that one of Hull's Express Freight's selling advantages is that they deliver shipments using clients' stationery. "This left us with a problem of how to bill our clients, as well as how to track the shipments," he explains. "One of our major issues is that we need to cater for duplicate waybill numbers (each client has their own number sequence, which does overlap through time) and then produce a unique number to track the shipment on."

Richardson formulated a plan to use a system -generated bar code procedure that would produce unique numbered labels when shipments are scanned in at the depots.

"This idea was chosen over a preprinted bar code parcel number so that we could have our own numbers to track the shipments on," he says. "Once in our system, we ignore the clients' bar coded waybills and use the system -produced bar code labels instead. This also allows us to determine which shipments have been entered into our system and which have not."

The system also improves billing operations, as no shipment can move without one of these labels.

<i>Symbol's RF scanners are used for track-and-trace and billing at Hull's Express Freight.</i>	<p>Hull's Express Freight explored various options and decided to utilise Symbol, based on the successful use of Symbol products by one of Hull's Express Freight's strategic customers.</p> <p>Hull's Express Freight has installed Phaser™ RF Scanners in Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, Bloemfontein and Pietersburg. Bar code printers are used to print tracking stickers that include summary -of-waybill information, while the RF scanners are used to scan shipments in and out of the various hubs.</p> <p>"Each parcel now has a unique, system -produced tracking number on it and we can immediately ascertain if a specific shipment has been captured into our system," says Richardson. "In addition, the accuracy is excellent."</p> <p>Productivity has improved as well, with more shipments able to be scanned using the RF scanners. Return on investment is harder to quantify, but Richardson says that being able to ascertain if a shipment has been scanned helps to trim extra costs.</p>
---	--

Alan Churcher, managing director of Synapse Hardware, the Symbol value -added reseller responsible for the installation of the system, added that the is one of Symbol's third generation cordless scanners optimised for industrial markets such as warehouses or distribution centers.

"The 100-foot radio range, keyboard, and display provide the operator the ability to move around the floor, without sacrificing the ability to scan, key data, and view prompts from the host. All this added capability means increased productivity for the operator."