COMPANY: BURRIS LOGISTICS
INDUSTRY: COLD STORAGE—THIRD-PARTY LOGISTICS

VOICE POWERED RESULTS:

OBJECTIVE
- Improved accuracy and operational efficiencies

APPLICATION
- Order selection: case picking

INSTALLATION
- Burris-developed WMS
- 25 Vocollect Talkman® T2 computers
- LXE 2 Mb backbone, 802.11b RF system

RESULTS
- Accuracy up to 99.88%
- 11.9 % increase in productivity
- $50,000+ annual savings on labels

ROI
- Payback in 10 months

FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS
- Voice-directed receiving, put-away and replenishment
- "Do-it-all with voice" workplace

"The Vocollect system enables us to get the right product to our customers more efficiently and cost-effectively than ever before."

Ed Krupka
President of Burris Information Technology
Burris Logistics

HOT SOLUTION FOR REFRIGERATED & FREEZER LOGISTICS

Burris Logistics is one of the largest cold storage, third-party logistics (3PL) distribution operations in the nation. Headquartered in Milford, Delaware, Burris operates a network of warehouses in 13 strategic locations throughout the eastern US, comprising more than 50 million cubic feet of refrigerated/freezer space. Because each warehouse has the ability to develop custom storage and transportation solutions for its customers, Burris is regarded as one of the most sophisticated operations of its type. Information technology has enabled Burris to establish that reputation — including Voice-Directed Distribution™ from Vocollect.

VOICE-DIRECTED DISTRIBUTION™

THE CHALLENGE:
Set a New Standard for Service

As a third-party logistics provider (3PL), Burris Logistics is always in the hot seat, expected to deliver outstanding service day in, day out — and do it as cost-effectively as possible. It's no wonder Burris turned to information technology to make sure it provides extraordinary service.

Burris lives with the day-to-day challenges of a refrigerated 3PL. In particular is the mix of products in a facility at any given time, which are always changing with customer contracts. Managers are aware of each customer's widely different requirements, including labor standard variances, service levels, and processes, from one day to the next — and often times, from one room to the next.

Such challenges are business-as-usual at Burris' 132,000 square foot facility in Federalsburg, Maryland. The majority of that space is refrigerated/freezer: 3.5 million cubic feet, offering more than 11,000 refrigerated pallet positions that turn over 45,000 shipped cases per week. A staff of 20 or more order selectors work six days a week, 3 PM to midnight, in order to meet early-morning delivery schedules.

Federalsburg switched from paper pick lists to labels a few years ago; it was a big step forward and helped the facility build its rating as Burris' all-star performer. Still, workers had to stop and read label information to do their jobs.

THE SOLUTION:
Federalsburg Finds Its Voice

With an enviable record of 99.6 percent accuracy on customer orders, the Federalsburg DC might seem an unlikely place to seek out operational improvements; but that's exactly why Burris' executives selected it for their project pilot. If Burris' best facility could improve key measures by 10 percent, there would be no question about the impact voice-directed distribution would have across their entire network.

Early in 2004, Federalsburg implemented Vocollect's Voice-Directed Distribution, which combines Vocollect's industry-leading industrial speech recognition software and the Talkman® T2 wearable computer. Vocollect was selected not only for the strength of its offering, but also for its successful track record, steady product improvement, and high-volume customers.

Burris targeted deployment within six weeks, but was up and running in just four. Because of the Vocollect open integration architecture, the group was able to develop a direct interface to the Burris warehouse management system (WMS) solution. The integration of the Burris WMS and Vocollect solution was completed over one weekend.

THE RESULT:
Exceeding Expectations

Within the first full week of implementation, the Vocollect solution not only hit the target for order accuracy, it exceeded it – delivering an impressive 99.88 percent. That's helping Burris avoid 9,000 case errors per year: errors that waste time, money, necessitate costly auditing, and jeopardize customer relationships.

The Vocollect system also exceeded goals for productivity improvement. Federalsburg had been picking 143 cases/man-hour. With voice, that number shot up to 160 cases/man-hour: an 11.9 percent increase in productivity and an annual labor savings of $70,000.

Still more savings credited to voice: 2 to 3 cents per case on label costs. Multiplied over 2.3 million cases a year, that's a savings of over $50,000. The goal is to achieve "zero wait time" by selectors. Because voice gives managers a real-time view into what's happening down to the individual worker, they can monitor activities, adjust workloads, and take charge as needed, when needed.

Given the successes at Federalsburg, Burris is rolling out the Vocollect system at facilities throughout the eastern US. And, once voice is fully implemented into picking, it will be expanded into other core applications, including receiving, put-away, pallet retrieval and relocation.

"It's always been awkward and slow for people – and problematic for equipment – working in cold temperatures. Not any more. Not with voice!"

–Ed Krupka
President of Burris Information Technology, **Burris Logistics**

Vocollect®
Voice-Directed Work™

www.vocollect.com

Vocollect Americas:
info@vocollect.com

Vocollect Europe:
voc_emea@vocollect.com