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## TCO WINS J.J. TAYLOR OVER TO ZEBRA® MOBILE PRINTERS

### Challenge

Route accounting operations needed refreshment at J.J. Taylor Companies Inc., the fifth largest beverage distributor in the U.S. The company had outgrown its existing delivery software application and recognized the limitations of its legacy mobile printers and Palm® OS-based handheld computers. J.J. Taylor needed to upgrade to a system that provided newer, more advanced capabilities yet offered the flexibility to grow with its business. And based on its past experience, the company sought a complete solution where the combination of products, supplies and service would provide the best long-term performance and total value.

J.J. Taylor operates in the Fort Myers, Naples and Tampa areas of Florida, and in Minneapolis/St. Paul. The combined operation serves nearly 11,000 retail accounts and delivers more than 23 million cases of beer annually. J.J. Taylor is an industry leader in adopting technology to support operations. Over the years it has automated its warehouse management systems, adopted wide-area wireless computing technology for its pre-sales personnel, and instituted mobile computing and printing applications for delivery drivers.

### Solution

For its next-generation route accounting system, J.J. Taylor selected Microsoft® Windows® CE .NET based application software running on handheld computers, linked via Bluetooth® technology to extremely rugged Zebra® mobile printers. J.J. Taylor worked closely with Rutherford Associates and Barcoding Inc., an award-winning systems integrator and Zebra Premier Partner, to identify the requirements and recommend a solution that would support continued growth and innovation.

Barcoding Inc. and Rutherford Associates recommended a complete solution to meet J.J. Taylor's needs, which included Rutherford's eoStar route management software, Symbol Technologies' MC9063 handheld computers, and an upgrade to Bluetooth-enabled RW 420™ thermal printers, Zebra's most durable mobile printer. J.J. Taylor plans to convert more than 200 routes to this new system.

J.J. Taylor's IT staff had some concerns about converting from a cabled computer-printer configuration to the Bluetooth interface. The safety and convenience benefits for day-to-day operations were clear, but the IT staff envisioned a lengthy, tedious setup process.

"We're in IT, so when we hear 'Bluetooth' and 'setup,' we cringe," said CV Eaton, J.J. Taylor's MIS manager. "You expect that installation and configuration will take a lot of time, but the Zebra units were actually very easy to set up. We got the Bluetooth association done (a security configuration so the printers can only communicate with J.J. Taylor's mobile computers) in about an hour total for all the printers. That's not very long at all."



### Zebra® RW 420™

#### Customer

J.J. Taylor Companies Inc.

#### Industry

Beverage Distribution

#### Challenge

Having outgrown its current warehouse management and direct store delivery systems, J.J. Taylor needed to upgrade to a newer, more advanced system with the capability and flexibility to grow with its expanding business.

#### Zebra Solution

Zebra RW 420

#### Results

- Drivers can instantly generate delivery receipts and make changes to invoices on-the-spot, saving back office processing time.
- J.J. Taylor's rugged, reliable solution withstands the tough demands of daily delivery tasks.
- Bluetooth connectivity saves money in cable replacement costs and addresses safety concerns.

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J.J. Taylor customers sign for their deliveries right on the mobile computer screen and drivers instantly generate a delivery receipt with the printer. The receipt includes an image of the customer's signature. Printing on site at the time of delivery also allows J.J. Taylor to include any changes to the invoice from the original order, for example to reflect credits or other adjustments. The application requires no paperwork processing for J.J. Taylor because all records and transactions are entered on the handheld computer and transferred to host systems.

J.J. Taylor had previously experienced some reliability and durability problems with its non-Zebra mobile printers. Because of this, Zebra units were chosen as replacements even though J.J. Taylor still had spare legacy printers that had not yet been deployed. The Zebra printers offered superior ruggedness, ease of use, and the quality and breadth of service that Zebra and Barcoding Inc. can provide. To improve performance and simplify maintenance management, J.J. Taylor also chose a convenient Zebra Complete™ supplies and service program, so there is a single point of contact for any printer-related issues at any geographic location.

## Results

Bluetooth printing and .NET-based software were two of the biggest changes from J.J. Taylor's legacy operations; they gave the company a flexible mobile technology platform to meet both current and future needs. The new system has also simplified the jobs of both drivers and support staff.

"Our guys like the Zebra printers better than the previous units," said Jose Rivera of J.J. Taylor. "They are easier to use and easier to load. They're also more rugged, which we proved by driving a truck over one printer: It's still working."

Dropped units are still common—but much less of a problem than they used to be. "A number of the RW 420s have been dropped many times already, and they're still working," said Eaton. "They're more rugged than the printers we had before, and they're faster too."

One reason the new printers are more rugged and reliable is because there are no cable connectors or pins to break. "Drivers like the Bluetooth connectivity better because the cord isn't dangling everywhere," said Eaton. "Plus, we don't ever have to worry about replacing cables." Bluetooth also addresses the safety concern that cables might get tangled up or caught on various items in the vehicle.

From the ease of initial setup, to the durability and reliability for day-to-day operations, and the convenience of an integrated supplies and service agreement, J.J. Taylor found the right combination of printers and partners to meet its current needs, while providing the flexibility to grow to meet its future needs.

"When the total cost of products, service and supplies was considered, it was a very easy decision to go with Zebra and Barcoding Inc.," said Tony Horling, director of mobile application solutions for Barcoding Inc. "No one else came close, and now J.J. Taylor has a solid technology platform for today and the future."



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