Case Study

TSC is pick of the crop for leading UK fruit farm

Thomas Thomson (Blairgowie) Ltd carries out mobile technology refresh and implements new fruit picking system.

TSC Barcode Solutions Ltd, a market leading supplier of mobile data collection systems, and its partner Psion, are today jointly announcing a new deal with Thomas Thomson (Blairgowie) Ltd for a fruit picking system using Psion's Workabout Pro 3 product to replace an existing fleet of Psion devices. The company is using Psion's rugged, modular handheld computers and software by TSC to help the farm with managing staff performance and productivity, maximising fruit yields and to meet its obligations to its supermarket customers for produce traceability.

Thomas Thomson (Blairgowie) is a Scottish based fruit farm that supplies grade A product to major UK supermarkets. In the low margin, high volume and quick turnaround business of fruit farming, the company's first priority is to drive costs as low as possible. This entails maximising the productivity of each field of fruit, identifying underperforming fields and turning around as much produce in as fast a time as possible.

The company employs 400 staff during its busy harvest season to meet the supermarkets demands for quality fresh British fruit. Groups of up to 30 workers use the Psion mobile computers to clock in and out, record piecework, and hours spent on different jobs such as planting or tunnel construction. The records play a critical role in producing the company's payroll.

The Psion devices are part of the *Thomas Thomson Fruit Picking System*, which was specified, designed and deployed by TSC Barcode Solutions, a leading provider of mobile computing, barcode and RFID data capture and label printing systems, in full co-operation with the farm. The system running on Psion's devices is helping to dramatically improve efficiency and productivity in the field by providing instant recording and access to benchmarking data.

The company had been using Psion's previous Workabout Pro devices but after nearly a decade of loyal service, Thomas Thomson's existing device had finally worn out as Administrator at the farm, Laura Woods, explained: "As you can imagine, a farm is a pretty demanding environment for any computer and our Psion devices had stood the test of time. However, we'd reached the point where we were cannibalising three units to make one working device and needed to upgrade our Workabout Pros".

The company chose Psion Workabout Pro 3 for three reasons. "We'd had a long and positive experience with the Workabout Pro devices on our farms and trusted Psion to give us the same experience with the new units. Workabout Pro 3 also gave us larger and improved screens that enabled the use of sophisticated productivity and reporting software in the field saving time downloading data at the end of an already long day. The third reason was that Workabout Pro 3 is a modular device and we liked the idea of being able to swap modules in the field rather than having to send devices back for repair or upgrade," said Laura Woods.

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Thomas Thomson now relies on Psion computers for all its performance benchmarking. Company supervisors can check key performance reports, such as field yield and staff performance in real time as often as they wish directly on the Psion Workabout Pro 3 devices. Finally, the company can also meet traceability requirements coming from the supermarkets. With the use of the Workabout Pros high quality bar code scanners, they can record each bar-coded tray rapidly and the data for that tray is stored in the farm's systems in case any problems with produce are identified in the packhouse.

In the future, the company is considering moving to wireless downloading of data, so the Workabout Pro 3's mobile capabilities will prove valuable here too.

For more information contact TSC Barcode Solutions on **0845 649 2950** or visit www.tscgroup.co.uk

About Psion

Psion is the pioneer of quality mobile handheld computers and their application in industrial markets around the world. We have been innovators in mobile computing since 1980, starting with the invention of the PDA, through to helping our global customers solve their business problems today. Our clients include Volkswagen, SNCF, RWE nPower, E.ON, BMW, Goodyear, Copenhagen Airports, BNSF and many others.

Through our open innovation business model, we have the ability to work directly with our customers and partners to co-create new variants of our mobile hardware, software and service that meet the specific needs of the marketplace. This collaboration is made possible by our open innovation community site,www.ingenuityworking.com.

Psion plc is a public company listed on the London Stock Exchange. It is headquartered in London with corporate offices located in Europe, North America, Asia Pacific, Latin America and Africa. For more information, visit www.psion.com

About TSC Barcode Solutions

TSC Barcode Solutions Ltd, with offices in Pewsey in Wiltshire and Perth in Scotland, is the premier provider of barcode tracking and identification systems. As part of our solutions we supply barcode scanners, portable data capture systems, labels, label printers, label printing software, maintenance, service and support, for a wide variety of industries.

The company has a combined experience of over 40 years in supplying barcode, tracking and Auto ID solutions in retail supply chain, warehousing, distribution and logistics. For more information, visit www.tscgroup.eu