

CITIZEN SYSTEMS EUROPE

SMITHS NEWS SPEEDS UP PROCESSES BY 300% WITH CITIZEN PRINTERS



The latest label printing technology from Citizen Systems Europe, the leading manufacturer of label, bar code, portable and POS printers, is enabling Smiths News, the UK's leading wholesaler of newspapers and magazines, to print A4 consignment notes for its boxes extremely quickly and simply. Since installing the large format CLP 8301 printer, Smiths News has cut its printing times by 300%, considerably increasing the efficiency of its warehouse processes and ensuring it continues to meet the needs of its customers across the UK.

Smiths News was created in September 2006 and was previously part of the WHSmith Group. The company operates its service 24 hours a day, 364 days a year, with more than 4100 employees and using approximately 1200 contractors. Today, Smiths News serves

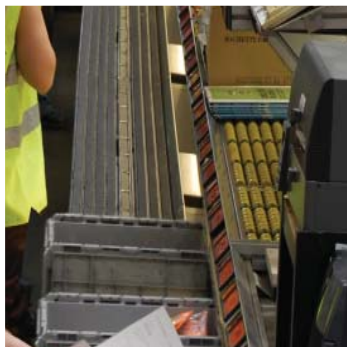




22,000 retailers, big and small, and delivers 59 million newspapers and magazines a week.



In such a time critical industry, Smiths News looked to increase the efficiency of its warehouse processes. Paul Webster, Operations Development Manager, explained, “We were using two large laser printers to print the A4 consignment notes that we put inside our boxes of newspapers and magazines for distribution. These printers were far from ideal as they were time consuming to use and maintain; this was putting unnecessary pressure on our warehouse operatives, who were becoming increasingly frustrated. Furthermore, the printers were unwieldy, requiring two people to lift them, and costly to run, frequently needing expensive toner cartridges.”



In an attempt to find a more suitable solution, Smiths News carried out extensive market research into the latest printing technology. They were looking for a robust, fast printer that would be cost effective to run and quick and easy to use. After conducting live tests and collecting user feedback on a number of machines, the company found that Citizen were “head and shoulders above the competition”.



Smiths News subsequently approached The Barcode Warehouse, a Citizen distributor based in Nottinghamshire, who offered their support to install the CLP 8301 printers at Smiths News’ warehouses across the UK. With the printers considerably easier to use and three to four times faster than the previous solution, one CLP 8301 could now do the job of two printers, saving the

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company valuable floor space as well as money.

The CLP 8301 features all-metal construction making it a durable solution for industrial environments, in addition to a Hi-Lift™ mechanism that minimises the space needed to install it, and makes it simple to load media or ribbons, leading to less downtime and errors. The printer's internal 200mm media capacity enables full size rolls to be kept within the heavy-duty metal case, protecting the media from dust and dirt and resulting in consistently high quality printing.

In addition to providing Smiths News with its latest CLP 8301 printers, Citizen carried out a firmware upgrade to the machines. Used in conjunction with a specially designed sensor and cutter system, the firmware ensures that when a printed page is torn off, the next page is printed out immediately. This bespoke feature was specially designed to increase the efficiency of Smiths News' processes. The firmware was developed overnight using Citizen's Chasing the Sun service, whereby its developers in Japan work on the job, while the client in the UK sleeps.

Paul Webster is extremely happy with the solution from Citizen, "We've had such a responsive and willing service from Citizen that I'm sure we made the right choice. The printers were adapted to meet our requirements overnight, which was a superb response. The CLP 8301s have allowed us to streamline our processes considerably and made life a great deal easier for our warehouse staff. In fact, we're so happy with the Citizen solution that we have further invested by using their CL-S700 printer for other areas of the pack operation."

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