

# MOBILE INVENTORY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



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## PROBLEM

This leading furniture manufacturing company had just installed a new flow rack, which they hoped would allow items to get from the warehouse floor to the trucks. In order to take full advantage of the new flow rack, they needed a better way to communicate with the people in the warehouse to efficiently get items from the warehouse, to the flow rack, and then to load the items on to the trucks. There was an existing application that ran on a bar code scanner, but it was ineffective in managing where items were in the warehouse. While the manufacturing process flowed well, the existing process broke down when it arrived to the warehouse. A new application needed to not only track changes, but assign a serial number to shipments, automate the process so that items were placed on the flow rack in the proper order for loading and communicate with everyone in the warehouse.



## CLIENT

A leading furniture manufacturing company started out producing novelty wall racks and eventually expanded into wood furniture. They design, produce and import commercial and residential furniture.



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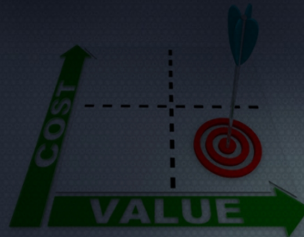
## SOLUTION

The entire warehouse was re-evaluated and re-designed to work with the new flow rack. A new hand held scanner program was developed by Guilford Group. All items were tagged as they came into the warehouse with a bar code that listed model and quantity, along with a location in the warehouse. The new scanner program allowed the warehouse "pickers" to efficiently locate an item in the order it was needed on the flow rack. It kept a task list, letting them know what was still needed and in what order. As each item was picked up, it was scanned with a handheld scanner which updated the list and the inventory. At the time of this project, Guilford Group and this furniture manufacturing company had been working together for approximately 15 years. The project took 6 months with 4 members of Guilford Group fully dedicated to this project. Even though Guilford Group was very familiar with the furniture company's operation, they spent time on site, evaluating the current process and the efficiencies needed. Because of what Guilford Group discovered during their time on site, there was some scope creep. For example, as the new system was deployed, it was observed that it worked very well until noon every day. After lunch, productivity fell off considerably. By spending time on site observing the workflow and the behavior of employees, Guilford Group was able to determine that it was a personnel issue. The program was adjusted to keep better track of where employees were in the warehouse, thus eliminating the personnel issue.



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VALUE

This furniture manufacturer was feeling the pressure of downward pricing in the marketplace. They needed to reduce costs to remain competitive. The entire manufacturing, importing and shipping process needed to flow smoothly in order to reduce costs. By implementing the new scanner system in the warehouse, the process became rhythmic and held all the way through shipping. They were able to forecast demand against their current supply more effectively and keep up with the market demands in a cost efficient manner. Because Guilford Group had worked with this company for almost 15 years before this project, they understood their business and objectives. Guilford Group's intimate knowledge of the business, along with their technical knowledge made a perfect partnership for this project.

