



Fabricator Adds Visibility to the Job Site:

*Inventory Accuracy, Control and
Improved Visibility to Project Status*

The Situation

Between the time it ships from the Fabricator and when it is erected at the job site, structural steel may seem to enter a virtual black hole. Because of the lag time involved with processing the paperwork, General Contractors often times do not have visibility to a project for days. Assemblies sometimes go missing in action. At any given time, there may be no way for the erector to tell if shipped assemblies have arrived at the site or where they are located, nor a way to determine if or when they have been erected.

Realizing that it would be a valuable service to their customers, a mid-west Fabricator desired to implement a system to reduce the paperwork, streamline the process, and accelerate accessibility to project status information from the job site.

The Challenge

The Fabricator's MRP system had the ability to track assemblies in real time from the saw through shipping. However, it stopped there. They did not have an automated way to track assemblies at the job site. There was no interoperability between the Fabricator's MRP and the software packages available to track inventory at the job site. Because they were not rugged enough to handle the elements and harsh conditions found at most job sites, the use of computers was limited for this type of data entry.

The Solution

The Fabricator enlisted the services of Radley Corporation and Design Data. Together they created a process that would track job-site status by scanning assemblies with rugged wireless batch terminals and update the status of the 3D model in their SDS/2 Detailing System.

Radley's Data Collection System already tracked progress and validated shipping in the MRP system at their fabrication facility. The Fabricator wanted to use the same simple interface to mark items as received at the job-site, track their location and mark them as erected. Tracking assemblies that were rejected for any reason was also an important factor. Radley quickly developed a solution that used the same equipment and bar-codes that were already being used in the plant.

A special device client was created to handle the receipt, location, erection and rejection jobsite transactions. As each event takes place, the barcode is scanned, location data is entered and all information is stored on the device in a Compact SQL database and periodically synchronized with the SQL Server data on the Radley system back at the fabrication plant. Of the various synchronization methods available, it was decided to communicate via a docking station connected to a PC with an active Internet connection, in the construction trailer at the site.

Once docked, the user presses a button on the device to begin the sync process.

The data is transmitted through the Internet utilizing IIS and SQL Server. When the device information arrives on the database at the main server, it is monitored by

the Radley Watchdog service and new transactions are parsed and processed by creating XML files that are transferred to a folder for synchronization with SDS/2. After the file is dropped, the transaction is updated as complete. The file is transmitted to SDS/2 which updates the 3D model to the appropriate color for the current status of each piece.

The Future

From receiving to erection, Radley WorkForce Productivity helps the steel industry gain project and process visibility. Focused on interoperability with other systems to solve problems, Radley Corporation bridges the gap often found between software solutions. Radley clients move forward confident that their systems are flexible and able to grow with them into the future.

About Radley Corporation:

Enhancing your technology investment — by streamlining data entry and daily operations, and automating data flow, Radley's WorkForce Productivity Suite for the Steel Industry is a mobile computing and data collection system that provides a complete work force optimization solution. Radley's x/DC provides a user friendly interface and enhanced functionality to tracking and shipping processes. Delivering real time information that is critical to adapting to today's ever changing business climate, x/DC validates from your MRP/ERP database and updates it with each completion - as it happens. Without separate databases and manual data entry, better data is available immediately. Personnel can take action while it still matters. Modules for Time & Attendance, Labor Tracking, and Product Traceability are also available.

RADLEY
CORPORATION

Radley Corporation

Telephone: 616.554.9060

eMail: steel@radley.com

website: www.radley.com/steel

