



Stock Management

## Dakota Helps Monks & Crane Keep Their Stock in Check with Zebra TC26 Mobile Computers

Established in 1862 as an engineering file manufacturer trading from premises in Redditch, the Monks & Crane Industrial Group distributes products such as cutting tools, oils and lubrication, PPE products, fasteners, machine tools and office supplies as well as soldering and welding goods to its extensive customer base operating within a wide variety of industries including aerospace and engineering.

Dedicated to helping its clients run their businesses more efficiently by managing their stock control operations in an effective, productive, profitable, safer and streamlined way, Monks & Crane help them to achieve measurable cost savings, enhance their productivity and service levels, reduce transactional costs and consolidate their supply chains.

Monks & Crane's innovative enterprise-level solutions are achieved through close working relationships with their suppliers in order to ensure a high level of availability and competitive product pricing.

When Monks & Crane needed to update their end-of-life mobile computers in order to keep up with their stock control and stock checks, they turned to their incumbent automated data capture solution partner, Dakota Integrated Solutions, for advice and assistance.



Stock Control



Accurate Invoicing



Technology Update





## The Problem

Monks & Crane utilise mobile computing devices in two ways. In the first instance, their envoys use the devices to measure stock levels directly at their customers' sites, using the devices to scan existing item quantities, enabling them to charge for what the customer has already used and subsequently replenish the customer's stock within their warehouse. In some instances, however, Monks & Crane provide several customers with their own devices so that they can do this themselves on site, reducing the need for envoy site visits. This system ensures that the customers are only charged for what they have used and can rest assured that stock will always be replenished so that they never run out of certain mission-critical items.

Monks & Crane were previously using Zebra TC55 mobile computers, however with the device soon becoming end-of-life and product servicing likely becoming problematic as a result, as well as the emergence of communication issues due to an older version of Android being installed onto the devices, it became clear that they needed to source alternative mobile technology in order to facilitate their processes and streamline operations.

Finbarr O'Keeffe, Head of IT at Monks & Crane explains, "Whilst we were happy with our old TC55 devices, the issue of an end-of-life date for these units would have presented a problem for us in terms of servicing the devices and keeping them up and running in order to continue to provide the high level of service that our customers have come to expect. The older version of Android running on these devices was also starting to prove challenging, so we turned to our incumbent data capture provider, Dakota, to ask for advice."

## The Solution

In order to provide Monks & Crane with a fit-for-purpose mobile computing solution, Dakota suggested the Zebra Android 10-based TC26 Touch Computer.

John Greenwood, Systems Integration Specialist at Dakota explains, "Having listened to Monks & Crane's list of device prerequisites, we were happy to



recommend the Zebra TC26. Equipped with an Android 10 operating system and a whole host of user-friendly features including a hot-swappable battery, a Gorilla Glass touchscreen display and a range of connectivity options, including GPS, this device seemed to be the perfect fit for Monks & Crane in terms of their requirements and what they wanted from a device with regard to functionality. And thanks to an IP67 durability rating despite its lightweight and compact form factor, this device would not only enable Monks & Crane to deliver on-the-job efficiency and task accuracy, it would also ensure that the devices would be able to withstand any knocks and bumps associated with mobile, heavy usage applications.”

## The Result

The results of the new device deployment have been far-reaching.

Sue Kendrick, IT Help Desk Coordinator at Monks & Crane explains, “The new TC26 devices have given our envoy team a new lease of life in terms of device reliability and operability. The hot swappable battery feature of the TC26 has been a real game-changer for us, allowing for continuous device use in the field, while the ability to capture data quickly and accurately and feed that information back to our system in real-time has enabled us to invoice our customers and replenish their stock quickly and accurately, increasing our service levels as well as enabling us to keep track of our own stock status.

Our supply chain is now more streamlined than ever before, and our productivity and levels of efficiency have increased dramatically. We were delighted when Dakota recommended this product to us as it delivers everything we asked for and more. The service which we receive from Dakota is second to none; we really cannot fault it. Having worked with Dakota for around twenty years so far, we look forward to continuing our relationship with them in the future and wouldn't hesitate to recommend them to anyone.”

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