



## DLoG Hardware Gives Umbro a Sporting Chance

When Umbro, sponsor and official kit supplier of the England national football team, was purchased by the American sports apparel and footwear giant, Nike, in 2007, a period of investment and improvement at the company's facilities in the UK followed. This included ruggedized vehicle computer terminals for its warehouse operation, provided by DLoG



### Feature Overview

#### Customer:

- Umbro International, Cheshire (United Kingdom)

#### Requirements:

- Fast and reliable stocking & picking solution
- Embedded operating system for security
- 1 GHz processor

#### Products used:

- DLoG MPC 6 with Windows Embedded XP

#### Benefits:

- Increased scanning efficiency

Sportswear maker and partner of The FA, Umbro, uses business logistics specialist Great Bear to operate its UK warehouse facilities. The shared user warehouse covers 330,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, of which Umbro occupies around 130,000 ft<sup>2</sup> with a mixture of high bay racking and fixed bins. Currently around 40 full-time employees work on a single shift to support Umbro, covering goods in, stacking, order fulfilment and goods out operations, with nine forklift trucks in daily use.

With the seasonal spikes in Umbro's markets it is difficult to put an exact figure on it, but the average pick is tens of thousands of pieces per day, with differing daily ratios between footwear and apparel. Umbro has been using this warehouse for around 13 years and up until last year was operating its own enterprise resource planning (ERP) software. This was developed in-house and was specifically designed to meet the company's needs.

However, when Umbro moved to Nike's preferred ERP platform, SAP, great effort went into making sure it could still cope with the same product volumes using the new system, with the same number of staff. Desk Top Support Analyst, Andy Scholes, recalls: "There were certain business risks with Umbro running the old system. So in December 2008, the SAP project kicked off with core groups from Nike and Umbro staff, including myself. That went live in April 2010 and from my perspective it was very successful, we didn't have too many issues. One of the few issues was the truck mounted computers used for stocking and picking information. To scan products using the new SAP software on the old truck mount PCs took around 5 seconds per item. So, for the average items moved daily we worked it out as roughly an hour a day lost for each truck driver doing the same volume of work."

SAP recommended DLoG's hardware based on the positive experience of another customer faced with similar problems. However, the truncated timeframe of the project put pressure on every decision Andy Scholes and the team made. "First, we had a 10 inch DLoG unit on trial but with the smaller screen the text shrunk slightly. Our previous units were 12 inch and we felt that the bigger screen displayed the data clearer. DLoG replaced the trial unit with a 12 inch one just before Christmas," he says.

Umbro didn't want to take any chances with the performance of the PC units, so Andy Scholes selected the fastest specification available. "The MCP6 device was far ahead of anything else offered with a 1.6GHz dual-core processor, I couldn't find anything that even came close," he says. "DLoG was also somewhat bemused at the processor being so over specified, but we just wanted the very best that we could get. However, as soon as we tested the 1GHz units recommended by DLoG we knew they offered plenty of performance."

### Tailored Solution

Rather than the one size fits all approach, every DLoG unit is made to specification so you do not pay for something that you don't need. DLoG Business Development Manager, Sudip Masoji, says: "The units were initially over-specified because there was no time in the project to get it wrong, they just wanted to get the best available. It was very refreshing working with the Umbro team because they listened to what we suggested, trialled the units and achieved the expected results."

"We spent a lot of time getting things right with the software image and keys," he says. "Our technical team allowed us to customise the touch-screen keyboard, lock it down, and embed it so it is really secure. The forklift truck drivers can't get into the system, and even if they did change something the fact that it's embedded means that it can be reset back to how it was just by powering down and rebooting. It is very secure, that's one of the big plusses for us and it does seem like you can't break these rugged units."

Moving to the new DLoG MPC6 truck-mounted ruggedized PCs relieved the previous inefficiencies with a one second scan time - saving 4 seconds on every item scanned. "It was a big deal within the whole project, with that many picks per day it quickly adds up and reduces the waiting time for the staff as well. It may take a second to send the data, but you can do the next scan within that time, the previous system couldn't do that you had to wait for the 5 seconds to elapse, if you went too early you could



get a problem, if you got it wrong you would have to go into the screen and re-scan," explains assistant operations manager, Simon Hodgson. Visually the screen looks very similar to the legacy system, for picking the drivers see a list of locations and cartons, materials, sizes, where the items are by exact aisle and rack. Likewise, if they are on put-away the screen will tell them which location to go to, and they simply scan the shelf bar code to confirm the stock update live to the SAP system.

Andy Scholes states: "What I have found through the whole project is that DLoG has been very helpful, something anyone working on an installation such as this would appreciate. With DLoG the response to any questions has been nearly instantaneous. I just speak to Sudip, and if he does not have the answers he will go and get them. Not just at the start of the project, the help has been ongoing though we haven't had a lot of trouble in fairness. The fact that the MCP6 units are so rugged and reliable helps. There hasn't really been any support calls needed, DLoG units are quick, reliable and secure - they tick all the boxes."

Andy Scholes says many people within the company know that DLoG solved one of the biggest problems with the SAP implementation, and it solved it well. "We were going to get another device in and compare them, but in the end we didn't as the DLoG hardware was working so well," concludes Andy Scholes.

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