



...from the **Bar Code Experts** for inventory, asset and warehouse managers

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Customer Success Story - Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Asset Verification Project

The Challenge

In February 1998, SageData Solutions began discussions with AAFC on their departmental Asset Verification Project. The initial pilot project started with the newly formed Canadian Food Inspection Agency. All of the Agency's assets needed to be physically verified before going live with their SAP implementation on April 1, 1999 and before the Ministers had to sign off on the transfer of assets from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Health Canada, and Fisheries and Oceans.

The Solution

SageData's Bar Code Asset Tracking System - BassetPro was chosen as the "middleware" program to enable the Agency and the Departments to easily and accurately perform physical asset inventories and verifications. By using bar code labels and scanners instead of entering the data manually, the inventory was recorded by the asset verifiers in a fraction of the time. The system provided the branches flexibility in meeting their diverse requirements. For example, the Quebec region needed to track all IT assets, while CFIA's standard was only those assets worth over \$1,000.

The project was a challenge, coordinating efforts between CFIA headquarters in Nepean, their newly established Assets Management Center in Calgary, as well as 15 other locations was accomplished through weekly progress reports, conference calls and numerous meetings.

The actual verification started the first week of November 1998 and continued for the following ten weeks. The implementation of the BassetPro system enabled CFIA personnel to run a missing asset report to identify specific assets to be found or written off prior to the SAP transfer deadline of March 31, 1999. BassetPro also provided the capability to ensure that the SAP mandatory information was part of each asset record. Users could monitor their own progress by running an SAP validation test.

The result was 15,000 assets worth over \$300,000,000 were successfully imported into SAP by March 31, 1999. The SAP asset management module was populated with accurate and verified data. BassetPro successfully closed the gap between financial asset management and physical asset verification.

Since the initial CFIA proof of concept, AAFC has extended the application of BassetPro to include all branches across the country. They include Corporate Services, Policy Branch, Marketing and Information Services, and Research Branch. AAFC now has almost 40 BassetPro systems operating across Canada at all branch and regional offices.

Currently, SageData is developing a more rugged and automated transfer process that will reflect the concerns of all branches of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, a department that has taken the initiative to standardize their asset management program.

Benefits

Instant reconciliation of where an asset is located has eliminated massive manual reconciliation. A common issue found prior to the installation was one region would report a "new asset"; another region would report a "missing" asset, but in fact both regions would be concerned over the same asset. This common issue of reconciliation has been totally eliminated with BassetPro.

All assets were labeled again with CFIA asset bar code tags, but through the smart "association" feature, all historical data was retained. This expedited the inventory verification process, as most data needed only to be visually checked and not entered from scratch.

The ability to add in new assets on the handheld, eliminated all duplicate data entry and possible errors. Users have a flexible system that allows them to track what they want, regardless of SAP constraints.

BassetPro provides historical transaction data automatically, so a user can see when and where an asset was moved.

Electronic notes allow the user to make notes of any kind on the mobile handheld. These notes are permanently attached to the asset record and can provide maintenance detail at the touch of a button.

Bar Code User Tip - What is Radio Frequency (RF) data collection?

It involves the use of wireless technologies to help move data that is being collected by the wireless handheld terminal. The data is transferred from the handheld via radio transmission and received by an access point, which is connected to a PC on a Local Area Network (LAN), then transferred to the main database. Incorporating wireless RF handhelds, ensures your data is updated within seconds of when an item is scanned.

Provided by SageData Solutions Inc.

Bizarre Bar Code - The Prime Minister's Office Equipment and Assets

Many years ago, SageData Solutions was asked to perform an inventory of the Prime Minister's Office equipment and assets. The inventory project was before there was sleek integrated handheld computers with bar code scanners. In the past, auditors were "armed" with brick-like devices with a tethered laser scanner that looked like something out of Star Wars. Because of the high profile of the office holders, the bar codes for many items were concealed and the auditors had to search on hands and knees underneath desks and chairs to find the elusive bar codes. On one such occasion, one auditor was underneath the Prime Minister's desk searching for its bar code, when he noticed a set of Oxford shoes only inches away from his face, poking through from the other side of the desk. He slowly emerged from under the desk, pointing his laser "gun" at the surprised security staff. He calmly informed him that it was only programmed on "stun" and wasn't dangerous. We believe it is the only time that a staff member has been frisked while performing their duties.

Story provided by SageData Solutions

Please send us your bizarre bar code story to sara@sage.ca. When your bizarre bar code story gets published in the newsletter, we will send you a FREE SageData t-shirt!

About SageData Solutions

SageData Solutions Inc. is one of the world's leaders in software development for bar code, inventory control, asset tracking and warehouse management systems. The company has implemented several hundred custom and standard applications for government and private sector organizations. The company currently focuses on the development of cost effective "off-the-shelf" solutions for local and worldwide export markets, closing the gap between desktop systems and mobile workers.

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