SATO

Case Study

Dish Network Implements 2ST Printing

DISH Network, a Fortune 200 company and the third largest paid TV provider with millions of customers and thousands of employees nationwide, determined they needed a more efficient, customer-centric process for receiving and shipping refurbished set-top boxes to their customer base from their service centers.

The process in which return equipment arrives to DISH Network distribution center is by truck and is unloaded using conveyors and opened by an automatic box opener. The equipment is then processed through the receiving area to close the assigned RMA (Return Merchandise Authorization). Return equipment includes satellite receivers and accessory equipment such as remotes, batteries and switches. Each item is refurbished and retested for reuse by their customers. Within a production cell, receivers are processed through a visual cosmetics inspection to ensure product integrity and quality appearance and then receive updated firmware. After extensive operational tests are applied and the receivers are deemed ready

Dish Network Implements SATO 2-Sided Thermal (2ST) Printing | Efficient Customer-Centric Process Increases Flexibility in Identifying Return Locations

for redeployment, they are pre-packaged in preparation of shipping to a customer and placed back into inventory.

Should any customer desire to change a satellite receiver for any reason, an exchange satellite receiver is shipped. DISH Network's existing process involved placing a return label inside the box, pre-packing the satellite receiver and placing it on the inventory shelf for shipping at some point in time. According to Sandy Parlier, Logistics Manager, "The issue was that we had no flexibility in identifying the return location for that particular satellite receiver. We were stuck with what we had."

SATO 2ST Printing Solution

SATO provided a solution that included the SATO GY412 2ST printer that enabled DISH Network to print on both sides of the label. The SATO GY412 with print speeds up to 10ips, ruggedized cabinet, onboard interfaces such as USB, RS232 and Ethernet, easy media loading, either tear-off or cutter options for media handling was the right choice for both environmentally conscience and industrial application uses.

"We looked at several solutions including inkjet printers and laser printers, and we found the cost and size of the equipment for each solution was prohibitive," said Sandy

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Parlier. "Furthermore, we looked at a tri-fold type solution, but once again, the application and cost weren't practical for what we needed." Also, DISH Network, as an eco-conscious corporate partner, was considering ways to further its green initiatives. DISH Network recycles up to 99.9% of its materials which reduces its carbon footprint and its environmental impact. Returned batteries are removed during the receiving process and sent to a local recycling purveyor. In addition, styro-type packing material is processed through a densifying machine, then cubed and placed on pallets for shipment to a recycling partner who remolds the cubed material back into various forms of packing material for other industries.

The SATO GY412 lowers the overall cost of printing, which allows for greater efficiencies in processes and is environmentally friendly due to the double-sided, coated labels using thermal technology. It eliminates the need for secondary printers and the associated cost of additional media, ink and toner; resulting in total cost savings of 30% or greater in most all installed applications. The SATO GY412 solution provided more flexibility and visibility with an externally applied label and was what DISH Network needed.

Teaming with a national label converter, DISH Network designed their two-sided thermal label to create proprietary functionality and system visibility for inbound packages. DISH Network conducted a three-month pilot at one location (Spartanburg, SC) with one SATO GY412 thermal printer. The pilot proved to be very effective so it was expanded, and now DISH network is fully engaged with the SATO solution.

The advantages of Two-Sided Thermal Labels to DISH Network are "The value in this solution is the visibility it provides to our inbound shipments," said Sandy Parlier. "We can do workforce planning that tells us we're getting these models at certain locations. This lets us adjust our workforce to meet those requirements." "The second advantage is the last minute ability to 'steer' our product," continued Parlier. " I can say we need to start steering certain set-top box models coming out of Texas to Spartanburg because we're getting

overloaded in Texas, and we can now make the change immediately."

For the customer, it simplifies the means in which to return the equipment. In the past, DISH Network had the label inside the box where it often got lodged under the product or inside carton flap or simply lost. The customer now has a label that is on the exterior of the box which makes it easier to locate and use. In the end, "It's a customized shipping solution vs. a generic one, and that's a huge benefit to us," said Parlier. "DISH Network uses SATO's GY412 thermal printer with 2ST technology."

According to Raymond White, Site Director, at DISH Network's Spartanburg, S.C., service center, DISH Network has a commitment to "deploying leading edge technology to provide world class customer service" and the SATO GY412 with 2ST technology helps to execute that statement.

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