

## Supporting pillar of basic process chains

### Label printers ensure spare parts provisioning

**For sure, to provide 160 service technicians in Germany with spare parts overnight is a logistic challenge. Supply from one day to the next is guaranteed for orders coming in until 3:30 p.m. This is made possible by a suitable IT environment and robust thermal transfer printers providing a clear labeling of the spare parts and ensure a fast and secure identification at any time.**

“In our dispatch department lunch break still means calm before the storm”, explains Rüdiger Pasch, data processing coordination Manager of Hako GmbH, Bad Oldesloe, one of the leading manufacturers of cleaning equipment for commercial and municipal needs and responsible for the company’s SAP structure. “However, all this is changing early in the afternoon. If our service support has electronically ordered the spare parts until 3:30 p.m. we provide delivery over night and are able to ensure the machine availability required.”

To manage the parts’ deadline driven shipments the company has been using thermal transfer printers manufactured by cab Produkttechnik GmbH & Co. KG in Karlsruhe for many years now. Specifically, this concerns printers out of the A3, A4 and A+ series.

Hako offers a wide range of applications to prove the efficiency of the easily operated industrial printer systems. The extensive periphery and software, and mainly the network-compatible A+ series printer, allow to realize any particular request.

From Sydney to Madrid: The Hako IT-department supports both the company’s national and international SAP network. Paasch says: “We are closely involved into existing processes and maintain an ongoing dialogue with the operating departments to further simplify the processes ranging from logistics processes to the provisional handling of spare parts and to export procedures finally being implemented in data processing. Our process chains need to work easily. This also includes the label printing of spare parts. All data required that have been made available by the business management system need to be printed easily and fast and according to their corresponding programming.

### From spare parts delivery to production

The thermal transfer printers have been used first in Hako’s dispatch department for spare parts – no problem for the robust and solid systems within these rough industrial environments. Additionally, the manufacturer uses the printers in the incoming goods department and soon, they will be integrated in production to be used i.e. for creating typeplates or marking security advices. In Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium the printers are also used for postal delivery to create dispatch labels. Depending on the application the company prints and applies different label sizes.

The spare parts dispatch department in Bad Oldesloe alone has an overall print volume of 450 000 labels per year. All consumables are provided by cab, the printer manufacturer. No problem for the employees of the cleaning equipment manufacturer to reload material.

### Overnight on the spot

Deadline for orders is 3:30 p.m (german time) to trigger overnight delivery. Orders are placed either by electronic order, reseller shop or fax. Then, order entry and automatic forwarding of the picklist to the warehouse follow. However, the label is not printed when generating the picklists, but printed “on demand”. Paasch says: “This was our team’s wish. Our employees do not like to have a lot of labels being fixed at the lists with a clip making the handling much more difficult and maybe causing errors.”

The picklist shows a barcode where all numbers for material and identification are stored. The employee in charge scans the barcode and then starts the printing of the labels. After that, the appropriate spare parts are order-picked in the warehouse and made available for packaging. Basically, every single part has its own label to make sure that the consignee immediately knows which part it is.

Generally, the label printing is realized by the SAP system. Before, programming was made by cab staff generating the labels in accordance to the relevant requirements.

According to Paasch this enabled “to make the best-possible use of everybody’s own, often highly specific, expert knowledge. I know the software and which fields definitely need to be filled in. The printer manufacturer, on the other hand, knows very well about the strong points of the hardware and about how to easily implement my specifications.”

The new generation printers enable to make all relevant data available via internal memory card; an easy way to adapt all data. Generally, only the latest data are sent to the printer to ensure that everything is running without any problem.