

JOHN BOWLER'S EGGS CRACKS EFFICIENCY SAVINGS WITH M-NETICS' IM2 EPOD SUITE

MANAGING THE ORDER PROCESS ELECTRONICALLY IS ESTIMATED TO SAVE AROUND 4.5 MAN-DAYS WEEKLY IN ADMINISTRATION TIME, AND IMPROVED PROCESSING OF DELIVERIES AT PACKING CENTRES SAVES EACH DRIVER UP TO 45 MINUTES PER DAY.



THE COMPANY

John Bowler's Eggs is one of the largest producers of free-range eggs in the UK. The company provides a complete package of services for franchise farms that includes assisting with planning applications, financial forecasting, site development, health and safety and more. The 150 farms supported by the firm care for around 2 million hens.

John Bowler's Eggs recently deployed M-Netics' ISIS MOBILE 2 (IM2) ePOD solution to help its delivery drivers improve efficiency and productivity. IM2, available on handheld computers, replaces paper-based systems with electronic processes for route scheduling, and egg pick-up and onward delivery. The technology is delivering a number of business benefits. Paper-based queries have almost been eradicated from a previous high of around 10% per week, managing the order process electronically is estimated to save around 4.5 man-days weekly in administration time, and improved processing of deliveries at packing centres saves each driver up to 45 minutes per day.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

- **Company**
John Bowler's Eggs
- **Location**
Derby, UK
- **Industry**
Food production / logistics
- **Software**
ISIS Mobile 2 (IM2)
- **Hardware**
Motorola MC9500 rugged mobile computer

“WE’VE DEPLOYED MOBILE APPLICATIONS BASED ON M-NETICS’ IM2 EPOD SOFTWARE TO AUTOMATE PROCESSES RELATING TO THE PICK-UP AND DELIVERY OF EGGS. WE’RE SEEING A NUMBER OF BENEFITS BUT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IS THE REDUCTION IN ‘ORDER EXCEPTIONS’. THIS IS WHERE OUR DRIVERS’ DELIVERY RECORDS WERE AT ODDS WITH THE FARMER’S OR PACKING CENTRE’S. BY IMPROVING DATA ACCURACY, EXCEPTIONS HAVE FALLEN FROM AROUND 10% PER WEEK TO A HANDFUL. THIS PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN REDUCING THE TIME NEEDED TO MANAGE ORDERS FROM FIVE MAN-DAYS A WEEK TO LESS THAN HALF A DAY. WE’VE ALSO CUT DRIVER WAITING TIMES SO WE’RE SAVING 12 HOURS ACROSS THE FLEET DAILY.”

Ian Chambers
IT Director, John Bowler’s Eggs

THE CHALLENGE

John Bowler’s Eggs used paper-based processes to coordinate pick-up and onward delivery of eggs for its franchise farms. The system relied on drivers accurately recording data (including 10-digit order numbers) to detail the type and volume of eggs picked up from farms and delivered to packing centres. Any error could lead to disparities between what the farmer believed was loaded on to the vehicle and what the packing centre logged. With 2,000 pick-ups and deliveries every week, there was significant scope for mistakes. And ‘exceptions’ – typically relating to the way eggs were graded – were running at approximately 10 per cent. Every disparity needed to be manually investigated. During the investigation farmers were paid a sub-payment until the details could be clarified. If the payment was higher or lower than the actual amount owed, further time was required to rectify the account. Administration of orders was taking five man-days a week. Therefore, John Bowler’s Eggs defined the need for a mobile computer system to decrease human error and enhance the efficiency of delivery processes.

THE SOLUTION

Following a tender, John Bowler’s Eggs chose M-Netics as its technology partner for three key reasons. First, its next generation IM2 Enterprise Mobility Suite was about to come to market. The comprehensive software delivers the key POD features needed by John Bowler’s Eggs with the option of customisation to map to specific requirements. Second, M-Netics has deep experience in the sector as it works with egg producer Noble Foods. Third, a good relationship had developed between John Bowler’s Eggs and M-Netics’ teams.

John Bowler’s Eggs retains a high degree of IT expertise. And all the components of the deployment were managed in-house, from installing the IM2 application server to its integration with John Bowler’s Eggs databases for route planning and scheduling, and the staging and deployment of Motorola Solutions’ rugged mobile computers. Deployment was straightforward with no major issues. The versatility of the IM2 ePOD suite has enabled John Bowler’s Eggs to automate key components of egg pick-up and delivery workflows.

The transport manager produces driver schedules. The driver logs on to the MC9500 rugged mobile computer and the schedule is downloaded to their computer. When arriving at the farm, the barcode for that premises is scanned to stipulate the hen houses where eggs on pallets are ready for pick-up. Template forms capture the required standard information, including one of three categories of eggs (ungraded – for processing at the packing centre, farm seconds and ‘double-yolkers’) and quantities. All data collected on site is communicated immediately over the mobile network to the back office. A receipt is printed using a Zebra mobile printer detailing compliance information (e.g. date and time of production and farm name and location) and egg quantities. A copy is handed to the farmer and placed on the pallets. The receipt includes a barcode that is scanned at the packing centre to cross-reference the order information collated on site with goods received.





BUSINESS BENEFITS

The driver collates data far more accurately while on site at each farm. And, as soon as the produce is loaded, John Bowler's Eggs knows the exact details of each consignment. The number of order exceptions has fallen from around 10% a week to a handful (any issues are usually caused by an unscheduled order). In turn, this means sub-payments to farmers that were made while exceptions were investigated have fallen dramatically, saving significant money. In addition, the previous paper-based system took five man-days a week to administer: a figure down to just half a day. Also, drivers used to have to wait at packing depots for paperwork to confirm deliveries. Now depots use handheld scanners to automatically record the barcode data on the delivery receipt provided by the driver. A POD note is produced immediately and the driver can be back on the road faster – the total time saving across the fleet daily is 12 hours.

For more information on how M-Netics can improve your logistics operations, please contact:

+44 (0) 1249 554150

or email: info@mnetics.co.uk

Visit us at: www.mnetics.co.uk

Application(s) M-Netics' IM2 ePOD supporting:

- **Route schedules:**
Delivery schedules are downloaded to drivers' mobile computers
- **Template data collection:**
Drivers detail egg categories and numbers on each farm using standard electronic forms
- **Electronic Proof of Collection (ePOC):**
Farmers are handed receipts immediately containing accurate consignment information including details required by law (e.g. date and time of egg pick-up)
- **Electronic Proof of Delivery (ePOD):**
Order sheets are affixed to deliveries by drivers. Barcodes, including the order information, are scanned by teams offloading eggs at packing centres
- **Time sheets:**
Driver hours are collated when logging on to and off from their mobile computer

Benefits

- **Accurate data capture:**
Drivers capture information quickly and accurately
- **Fleet efficiency:**
The faster processing of deliveries at depots due to the scanning of order details saves 12-hours daily across the fleet of vehicles
- **Exceptions fall massively:**
Order exceptions that were running at around 10% per week are virtually eradicated
- **Back office time savings:**
The previous paper-based system required five mandays a week – this has fallen to half a day
- **Data flow:**
Data flows around the business much faster and the validation of order details (through barcode scanning at packing centres) crossreferences ticket accuracy