Case Study

About the Company

Akebono Brake Industry Co., Ltd. http://akebonobrakes.com/), founded in 1929, is a world leader in advanced brake and friction material development and production. The Akebono Group operates R&D centers and manufacturing facilities in Japan, the United States, Europe and other locations in Asia.

The Challenge

Akebono has been successful around the world, and its products are available to both the major automakers and the local Pep Boys store. Straddling the two markets takes an extraordinary ability to manage the receipt, movement and shipping of materials at manufacturing facilities worldwide.

But the company's accomplishments have not come easily. Like other Eagle customers around the world, Akebono leveraged Eagle's Automated Data Collection (ADC) technology to help them integrate and streamline a global mix of plants, systems and processes into a cohesive whole. A good example begins with the receipt of raw materials.

Many Tier 1 suppliers like Akebono are challenged by the fact that *their* suppliers do not necessarily provide bar coded labels on inbound raw materials. That made Receiving a prime area in which Eagle could very quickly enable Akebono to gain insight into the movement of materials in its plants.

Eagle's ability to print bar coded labels at raw material receiving is the beginning of a flow of material and information that is accurate and timely. Regardless of how an incoming shipment is labeled, Eagle customers like Akebono can begin the internal scanning of materials by generating and attaching a

properly printed bar code label before the materials ever leave the receiving area and move into the plant or the warehouse.

Looking far beyond the receiving process, Akebono took into account the many challenges it faced in its global scope, mix of systems and need for consistent, streamlined flow. As they identified each challenge, they also established clear goals for their new ADC solution. They wanted accuracy, real-time information, cost reductions, greater efficiency and return on investment.

Why Eagle?

As is often the case, Eagle was chosen as the Automated Data Collection solution of choice because of its seamless integration with QAD, as well as its proven ability to provide fault-proof, real-time information. With over 800 customers around the world and 20+ years as QAD's strategic partner for Automated Data Collection, the selection of Eagle was the easiest step in the decision-making process.

Results and Benefits

Akebono has a strategic long-term goal to roll out RF Express™ for QAD Enterprise Applications on a multi-site, multinational basis. Some of those sites are as follows:

Mexico: After going live with Eagle and QAD in late 2013-early 2014, an Akebono manufacturing facility in Mexico has **already been able to upgrade** seamlessly and is currently gaining benefit at that location in shipping, receiving, inventory movement and production reporting.

Columbia, SC went live January 1 of this year and after six months, they are using Eagle for all shipping, as well as production reporting and inventory moves. Prior to implementing Eagle, this plant was reporting production once a shift or even the next day. **Now they are getting real-time information**. That is a significant improvement. An equally significant improvement is the accuracy that resulted when they stopped keying and started scanning.

Clarksville, TN expects to go live on August 1. Clarksville **tracks everything by serial number, with every container serialized**. This is an area in which Eagle can quickly give them exactly the results they need, as they have done for many organizations around the world.

Elizabethtown, KY is upgrading and **adding Eagle functionality that they didn't implement previously**. This is the largest facility in terms of part numbers and volume. Prior to 2008, this plant

used only manual reporting and tried a variety of solutions, none of which produced the results they needed. In 2008, the plant went live on Eagle for the first time, but only for shipping. Given the importance of accurate shipping to the automakers, it makes sense that that was a key starting point. Now, however, they will be implementing a full range of functionality they haven't take advantage of in the past.

Glasgow, KY is scheduled to go live in 2016. Like Elizabethtown, they are re-implementing and upgrading to a higher level of Eagle functionality.

Throughout this lengthy and complex rollout, Ted Long, Akebono's IT Director, commented that, "We have enjoyed a great working relationship with Eagle and know that we can count on them to help us ensure the results our management is looking for, not just at one location but across the board and around the world."

The Future

Akebono's implementation team began core modeling processes in 2014 with Eagle on the project team, and they have been rolling out the Eagle-QAD solution ever since. They anticipate at least another year before the rollout is complete.

According to Bill Paone, Eagle's Executive VP, Sales and Marketing, "It is always satisfying to be a part of helping a customer achieve not only their technical goals but their long-term business goals. In addition to the sites in America, Akebono will be implementing Eagle at locations in France, Thailand and other locations around the world."

About Eagle

Eagle Consulting & Development is the leading provider of portable wireless technology solutions for users of QAD Enterprise Applications worldwide. Eagle's product, RF Express™ for QAD Enterprise Applications, provides functionality for fault-proof, real-time automated data collection and bar coding at the single site or multinational level enabling manufacturers to achieve their data accuracy, inventory accuracy, labor cost and efficiency goals. Over 800 QAD customers at 3,000+ sites around the world have chosen Eagle to meet their automated data collection needs.

RF Express™ for QAD Enterprise Applications is available for on premise, cloud or blended deployment.

For more information, visit www.eaglecondev.com or contact Bill Paone at +1.973-838-5006 ext 119.

RF Express™ for QAD Enterprise Applications is a trademark of Eagle Consulting & Development.