

Tool Tracking

Company profile

- The company is a preferred vendor to a leading automobile manufacturer
- High degree of shared equipment in use
- High impact on labor performance due to equipment sharing

Business situation

In any automobile industry there is a lot of requirement for tools and their usage. Typically there would be multiple tool boxes used by multiple workers on the maintenance job. There would also be some tools which are expensive and hence procured in limited numbers. Therefore it is very much required to make optimum usage of these tools without causing delays.

Technical challenge

In the existing scenario at the client location, the issue and receipt of these types of tools are maintained with the store keeper and an entry is made in a register whenever it is issued. In the existing system it is difficult to keep a track of tools being returned on that specific day. Second, if somebody needs a particular tool urgently that is issued to another employee, its difficult to find it in the register. A lot of time is wasted in all these activities.

A simple solution to this issue would be to maintain the issue and receipt in a computer system where searching for a tool is easy. Still this requires a person to make the required entries.

Solution

Sameva along with its RFID technology partner proposed a solution which would optimize the usage of tools as well track them.

The solution was very easy and simple to use. All the tools that were to be tracked were tagged with RFID tags and each work location had a portal (reader) installed. Each physical location was mapped against the portals in such a way that any activity at any portal would indicate activity at that physical location. The entire workflow remained the same as earlier and no new process was added as far as employees were concerned. But there was additional benefit of a new display system which could locate a particular tool in terms of physical location.

The process was very simple: a UI was built on a touch screen which had the option of searching a tool by ID or name. The search result will display the relevant tool information and by selecting any one item on the list information such as when it was issued, to whom and currently where the location of that tool is would be displayed.

Benefits

This was the starting step for the client to delve into the RFID domain. This small solution proved to the client the amount of power such a solution with RFID technology can have. Thus the client went on to implement similar solutions to track and locate human assets as well.