Toshiba Increased Productivity by 25% with Speakeasy, Saving More Than $500,000

TOSHIBA

Profile: A global leader in helping businesses manage their communications, from paper to digital.

Industry: Digital products, services, and solutions

Website: toshiba.com/tai/

Solutions:
- Ivanti® Speakeasy
- Ivanti® Terminal Emulation
- Ivanti® Avalanche

Benefits:
- Toshiba IT resources not required for development or deployment
- Pickers operate in hands-free environment, enter data via scanner and voice
- 25-percent increase in productivity
- Automatic, real-time validation of order fulfillment and items
- Passed Toshiba's Lean Six Sigma process
- Annual savings of $549,548
- Solution pays for itself in fewer than three months

Overview

Toshiba America Business Solutions (TABS), Inc., was founded in 1999 and is headquartered in Irvine, California. Home to the MPS and Digital Signage Masters, the company helps businesses manage communications from paper to digital. TABS is one of five business units of Toshiba America Information Systems (TAIS) that provides digital products, services, and solutions ranging from award-winning notebook computers, branded storage products, and cloud services to data analytics and IT services. TAIS is an independent operating company owned by Toshiba America, Inc., which is a subsidiary of Toshiba Corporation, a Fortune Global 500 company with annual sales of US $63 billion.

Challenge: Streamline and Simplify the Picking Process

Toshiba America Business Solutions (TABS) operates a distribution center in Memphis, Tennessee, that supplies Toshiba repair teams across the country with parts and products. The facility prides itself on fast service. "People depend on us to deliver what they need as quickly as possible," said Daniel Sanders, Director of Distribution. "That's why we have a rock-solid service commitment to ship orders for finished goods and parts the same day we receive them. To meet this stringent deadline, we need a picking process that is highly efficient and productive."

Two-Step Picking Process Slows Productivity

Pickers at the distribution center relied on older generation, hand-held mobile computers to fill orders. The devices were heavy and dependent on key-based data entry. "Pickers used the computers to scan barcodes and

physically type in data," continued Sanders. "It wasn't an easy process. Each time they needed to enter information, they had to stop and put down the tote that held the parts they were picking. In addition, once an order was filled, it had to be manually verified by another employee—a very time-consuming second step in the process that added 20 to 25 percent more time per order."

Traditional Voice Solutions Were Costly, Not the Right Answer

Sanders wanted to streamline the picking process, make it easier for pickers to fill orders, and eliminate the quality control step. "About five years ago when we did a refresh," he said, "we thought about adding a voice component. But after studying various traditional voice solutions that were on the market at the time, we didn't feel comfortable with the products or the high costs associated with them, so we passed. However, now that it was time to do another hardware refresh, it made sense to also look at the latest software solutions."

Solution: Implement Ivanti Speakeasy

"When we researched the voice solutions on the market today," Sanders continued, "we saw that much had changed. After checking out Speakeasy and several other products, we chose Speakeasy. It offered everything we were looking for at a very good price. So it was an easy decision to make, and it's a good thing we did." Speakeasy was deployed on top of the Ivanti Terminal Emulation client, which provides the interface back to Toshiba's Warehouse Management System (WMS). The complete deployment is managed by Avalanche, the trusted Ivanti Enterprise Mobility Management solution.

Hands-Free Ivanti Solution Delivers More Bang for the Buck

After the Ivanti Professional Services team developed and deployed the solution, the benefits were immediate. "Ivanti Partner, ADSI, who we rely on for support, was also a great help," stated Sanders. "A big benefit for us is that no Toshiba IT resources were required. Now our pickers enter data via a Bluetooth ring scanner, and enter and receive data via voice through headsets. This highly productive combination creates a hands-free, multi-modal environment. Pickers no longer have to stop to enter data.

They are free to look where they are walking and use both hands to pick the parts. With wrist-mounted mobile

computers, pickers receive instructions through their headsets—via text-to-speech—and enter data via speech-to-text by simply talking into their headsets.

"Another key factor here is that often, multiple products are in the same bin. For example, standard printer ink cartridges come in a variety of colors but they all have the same part number. The only difference is that the code for the color—such as, C, M, or Y—follows the part number. The Ivanti solution is able to 'read' the order and speak the part number and color code to the picker, giving us greater order accuracy and speed. When using Speakeasy in high-volume areas where there's a lot of repetition, the benefit multiplies exponentially. You get much more bang for your buck."

Automatic Order Verification Increases Productivity Up to 25 Percent

The solution also eliminated the second verification step. "That quality control check now takes place simultaneously with the picking," explained Sanders. "Immediately after an item is picked, Speakeasy uses a check digit in conjunction with the host to confirm that the correct items and quantities are in the order. Removing that second quality control step alone increases productivity up to 25 percent, without affecting our high accuracy rate of 99.8 percent. Overall productivity was further improved because we were able to assign the quality-control employees to more valuable roles that add to our bottom line."

Speakeasy Passes Lean Six Sigma, Produces Annual Savings of $549,548

One unexpected benefit is that Speakeasy passed the company's Lean Six Sigma, a methodology that relies on a team effort to improve performance by routinely removing waste. "Passing Lean Six Sigma says a lot about the solution's quality," said Sanders. "And our executives back at headquarters noticed. In fact, they had me shoot a short video of Speakeasy in use at the center so they could learn more about it. We originally planned to use the solution in only two places—the parts-pick and supply-pick areas. But now, because we can easily justify

the return on investment, in the future we plan to use Speakeasy in other work areas, too. With Speakeasy, we're seeing a projected annual savings of $549,548 in productivity, training, and audit costs alone. The solution paid for itself in fewer than three months. Speakeasy delivered everything it promised, and more."

Learn More

▸ **ivanti.com/wavelink**

☎ **1 206 274 4280**

✉ **wavelinksales@ivanti.com**