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Three Simple Ways to Use Barcode Scanning to Track Work-in-Process

BellHawk Systems Corporation, is pleased to announce the availability of a new white paper "Three Simple Ways to Use Barcode Scanning to Track Work-in-Process". This white paper is available for download from the White Papers link at the bottom of www.BellHawk.com.



Operations managers in manufacturing and other industrial organizations are increasingly finding that tracking work-in-progress using paper forms and Excel spreadsheets, or using manual data entry into an ERP system, no longer meets their need to ensure that customer orders get out on time. Instead, because of short customer order delivery deadlines, they need to keep track of many different jobs for semi-custom products, in real-time, as they flow through multiple work centers.

At the same time, operations managers want to reduce their overhead cost by eliminating the need for manual keyboard data entry as well as eliminating the need for expeditors and customer support people to make sure customer orders get out on time. They also want to use systems that are low cost and simple for their people to use.

Barcode scanning is an ideal way to solve this problem. But, even here, there are trade-offs in which methods to use, depending on the data to be collected.

This white paper presents three methods for tracking work-in-progress:

1. Use license-plate tracking methods, to track items or containers of material as they move from operation to operation.
2. Track when work starts and stops on a job at each work center. This not only gives a more complete view of the status of jobs but also tracks the labor required.
3. Use a combination of the first two methods, and include tracking materials consumed and produced in each operation. This enables materials traceability and job costing data to be collected as well.

In this white paper we summarize each of the methods and then examine the pros and cons of using each method.

This white paper is written by Dr. Peter Green, who is the CTO of BellHawk Systems Corporation. BellHawk Systems provides real-time work-in-process and materials tracking systems for a wide variety of manufacturing, repair and other industrial organizations as well as materials traceability systems for food processors.

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