

CASE STUDY: HARVARD RETAIL

“This solution took a 12-15 hour inventory process down to about four hours ... even with cross checking (two counts) for the highest accuracy.”

Industry:	Distribution Center -- Inventory Management
Application:	Retail Pro from Retail Technology Experts (RTE)
Challenge:	Improve accuracy and increase productivity during daily operations and semi-annual inventory
Solution:	Janam XP20 mobile computers provided accurate, speedy barcode scanning with a long battery life

Inventory Solution Fits Retailer Like a Glove

Employees at Harvard Retail's design district distribution center in Miami handle the receipt and transfer of goods ranging from handbags, luggage and backpacks to men's apparel and tropical wear. With approximately 20,000 items in the 12,000 square foot warehouse, employees pick and pack goods for daily distribution to retail stores, receive goods from vendors and perform a semi-annual inventory. The company's manual operational and inventory processes, which involved counting all items by hand, proved to be cumbersome and unproductive. So Harvard Retail turned to Retail Technology Experts (RTE) in Miami, Florida, to provide an affordable mobile computing solution.

“We went in as a technology advisor, did the research and recommended the Janam XP20 mobile computer running our Retail Pro application,” said Mahendran Ramanathan, President of RTE. “The Palm OS®-based XP20 is perfect for Harvard Retail's daily operations because it is so light and easy to use. As an extra service, we also rent additional XP20s to Harvard Retail for their semi-annual inventory. This is a unique solution from RTE that helps businesses like Harvard Retail run their businesses with maximum efficiency. This rental option is very small- and medium-sized business friendly.”

The technology solution RTE recommended for Harvard Retail is a powerful combination. The XP20 mobile computers deliver excellent barcode scanning, even through garment bags and packing materials. They are rugged, easy to carry and provide a long battery life. Retail Pro is an affordable and scalable retail merchandising application that helps retailers run their businesses better. Retail Pro contains a Palm OS-based module—Smartscan—that allows retailers to upload the barcode data into the application's physical inventory module. This means that every time an item's barcode is scanned with the Janam XP20 handheld, Smartscan identifies whether or not that article is in inventory, saving valuable time.

Before deploying RTE's mobile computing solution, two of Harvard Retail's critical business processes were highly inefficient: the transfer and receipt of goods to and from the warehouse and their semi-annual inventory. Now, employees who pick and pack items for shipment track the product at the point of activity simply by scanning the barcode with the Janam XP20; and during the twice yearly inventory, employees conduct a more accurate count in less time (about four hours, down from 12-15 hours). The increase in efficiency created enough time for a cross check (second count), which is an added value.

Criteria and Observations >>>

“Using five Janam XP20s running Retail Pro, we count about 20,000 units in approximately four hours. The scanner is excellent which enables us to process items quickly.”

*— Oscar Mena,
Harvard Retail*



Light and easy to use, the rugged XP20 from Janam provides speed and accuracy for any-size company.

Harvard Retail Mobility Needs:

- Barcode scanning
- Battery life
- Form factor
- Backlit keypad
- Screen size

"The Janam XP20 scanner is very good and processes barcodes quickly," said Oscar Mena, Harvard Retail. "Employees quickly learned to use them because they're just so easy to use. The screen and keypad lighting are excellent for dark areas of the warehouse. All of these features enable our employees to work more efficiently, so I'd estimate a 30 to 40 percent increase in productivity."

More Accuracy, Efficiency for Daily/Annual Inventory

"The Janam XP20's are very easy to handle. The strap goes right on the hand, so it's almost like a glove. Its good battery life, backlit keypad and bright screen help increase productivity."

—Oscar Mena, Harvard Retail

The Janam XP20's save time for Harvard Retail in their daily warehouse operations and also increase productivity during the semi-annual inventory. The company identified the features that were most instrumental in achieving these benefits:

» #1 — Strong barcode scanning

Janam XP20s deliver improved accuracy, faster data capture and easily scan through garment bags and packing materials.

» #2 — Long battery life

Janam's battery lasts longer which is important for workers moving around the warehouse, both in daily operations and inventory.

» #3 — Mobile form factor

The device fits easily in the hand and is lighter and less bulky than other mobile computers. Employees simply strap it to their wrists and perform daily tasks.

» #4 — Backlit keypad and large screen

In the darkest corner of the distribution center, the Janam XP20 keypad and screen are bright and easy to see or read, enabling rapid inventory counts.

Janam XP20 Delivered:

» **Barcode scanning:**

Speed and accuracy for more efficient data capture

» **Long battery life:**

Non-stop productivity without having to stop and recharge

» **Form factor:**

Extreme mobility and ease of use for all employees

» **Keypad and screen:**

Brightness and visibility in both dark and well lit areas

About Harvard Retail

Founded in 1987 and based in Miami, Harvard Retail Group has 17 retail stores operating thorough two divisions: Kipling and Havana Nines. Kipling offers handbags, luggage and backpacks, and Havana Nines retails men's apparel, tropical wear, linens and guayabera, items typically worn in tropical areas. With locations throughout South Florida and St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the company has over 100 employees and has future plans to expand into Puerto Rico.

About Retail Technology Experts (RTE)

RTE's mission is to provide the best retail point-of-sale and inventory control technology solutions available—all tailored to a retailer's specific business operations, market and workflow needs. The company teams with the best POS software developers in the industry: Retail Pro and Microsoft Dynamics Retail Management (RMS). With a wealth of retail experience over the last 17 years, Retail Technology Experts has installed systems for over 500 companies and more than 1,000 stores.

Harvard Retail

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