

CASE STUDY: TRI CITY NURSERY

“An inventory count of almost 20,000 trees, bushes and shrubs now takes less staff and half the time to complete. It used to take 8-10 employees almost a month, so that’s a very real, tangible savings in productivity.”

Industry:	Wholesale and Retail Nursery
Application:	Counterpoint Software
Challenge:	Automate the existing paper-based inventory control system to boost efficiency and productivity
Solution:	Janam XP20 mobile computers delivered excellent barcode scanning, durability and easy portability

Wholesale and Retail Nursery Goes from Paper-Intensive to Paperless Inventory Control

Situated on 20 acres of land, Tri City Nursery delivers high-quality large caliper trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals to retailers, contractors and wholesalers across Utah, Colorado, Idaho and Wyoming. Tri City’s previous inventory process required 8-10 people hand-counting trees, bushes and shrubs which range in size from five- to 25-gallon pots. Inventory counts were noted on paper and later entered into the computer system manually. To improve productivity and efficiency, Tri City Nursery moved away from pads and paper and implemented a mobile computing solution to keep a current count of every item on their lot.

Working with Automated Office Systems, Tri City Nursery chose Janam XP20s running Counterpoint software from Radiant Systems with a Magic software interface that easily runs on the Palm OS®. The software handles Tri City’s inventory management and retail operations. The Palm OS-based Janam XP20 was chosen because of its barcode scanning capabilities, compact form factor and durability in tougher climates.

Today, Tri City’s inventory control process is fully automated and expeditious. To keep an accurate count of every item on the farm, each tree, shrub, bush, perennial and annual is tagged with a barcode. This contains all relevant information, including price, description and location. Using the XP20’s stylus, the employee taps the screen to choose a section of the lot and begins to scan the tagged items in that area for an accurate count. At day’s end, the Janam XP20 is returned to the cradle, and data is synchronized to the company’s inventory control system.

“Of course, the productivity benefits were immediate, and now we have an accurate count and know the exact location of every tree, shrub and bush,” said Rick Worthen of Tri City Nursery. “The Janam XP20 works great in the field and easily scans the tagged barcodes. And we don’t worry about the devices breaking, because they are tough enough to take the occasional drop, even if it’s very muddy out there.”

Overall, this mobile computing solution reduces the number of Tri City staff needed, from the previous 8-10 person workforce down to one or two employees. It also cuts the time in half, to two weeks from a month.

Criteria and Observations >>>

“We needed a compact, durable mobile computer that would handle scanning barcodes tagged on trees that range from one foot to up to 15 feet high. We looked at several and chose the Janam XP20.”

*— Richard Worthen
Tri City Nursery*



Janam XP20s speed inventory control, tree by tree, over 20 acres of land at Tri City Nursery.

Tri City Nursery's Mobility Needs:

- Barcode scanning
- Form factor
- Durability
- Battery

"The Janam XP20 was perfect because of its durability and battery life. Tri City needed a device to take inventory rapidly without errors," said Stan Porter, Automated Office Systems of Utah. "We wanted a device that could take being dropped, sometimes even in the mud, and these mobile computers are tough. The Janam XP20s work well and delivered a more practical solution than other devices."

Tri City Nursery and Automated Office Systems shared their criteria for choosing the Janam XP20 mobile devices:

» #1 — Barcode scanning

Janam XP20 delivers high-performance scanning and reliably captures data from the wraparound tags located on various sizes of trees, shrubs and bushes, enabling rapid inventory taking.

» #2 — Compact form factor

The Janam XP20s are lightweight, have a highly visible screen in both sunlight and shade, and a backlit keypad.

» #3 — Durability

Janam XP20s withstand tough environments and can handle the occasional drop in the mud and unpredictable weather conditions.

» #4 — Battery

The Janam XP20's have a long battery life which is good for a full day's work, and the rechargeable batteries help to simplify daily usage.

Delivering Mobility for More Inventory Control

"The distance and remoteness of Tri City's inventory made it very practical and cost-effective to use the Janam XP20 mobile computer for this solution."

— Stan Porter

Automated Office Systems

Janam XP20 Delivered:

» **Barcode scanning:**

From one foot up to 15 feet, scanning is fast and accurate

» **Compact form factor:**

Lightweight, visible screen and backlit keypad make work easy in any weather

» **Durability:**

Works well in tough and muddy environments

» **Battery:**

Strong battery life and rechargeability enhance productivity

About Tri City Nursery

In business for 10 years, Tri City Nursery provides high-quality large caliper trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals to retailers, contractors and wholesalers across Utah, Colorado, Idaho and Wyoming. It operates from a 20-acre farm in Utah, a 4,500 square foot retail garden center and another farm on the Eastern side of Idaho. With 40 employees, Tri City Nursery's has several million dollars in annual sales, and their mission is to provide the best quality plant materials at competitive prices.

Tri City Nursery

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