

CASE STUDY

U.S. Department of Defense Automated Manifest System

Durable and Reliable Credentials for the World's Harshest Environments

Problems arising from the inaccurate identification of contents of U.S. Department of Defense sea cargo containers led the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency to mandate a robust, multi-functional identification solution that would perform reliably in some of the world's harshest environments, including war zones. Nearly 20 years later, LaserCard's shipping, receiving and pallet identification system continues to set a ground-breaking standard in secure cargo identification.

The Problem

In the late 1980's the rapid deployment of more than 500,000 troops to the Persian Gulf for Operation Desert Shield/Storm placed a severe strain on the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) supply system. The agency's legacy material management system could not adequately identify nor maintain reliable records of critical supplies contained in the massive surge of incoming sea cargo containers.

Functional Goals

The DoD required a new system that would ensure the automatic identification of DoD supplies contained in cargo containers. The system had to simultaneously increase in-transit visibility, expedite receipt processing, prioritize container processing, facilitate discrepancy reporting, minimize impact on existing systems and provide a portable permanent record of transactions. Watertight security, fraud resistance and durability were therefore key elements for resolving the in-transit identification problem.

Requirements

The U.S. Government specified the highest standards for a new automated manifest system to address the need for security, counterfeit- and tamper-resistance, durability and the ability to store substantial quantities of data.

A Multi-Functional Solution

The U.S. Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) contracted with General Dynamics Information Technology and LaserCard to provide its new automated manifest system, based on the uncompromised digital security of LaserCard's optical media and the robust construction of the card. The program has met and exceeded all of the Army's security, durability and processing requirements since 1991. The AMS program has won numerous U.S. government awards, including the Vice Presidential "Golden Hammer Award" for cutting logistics costs over 67%.

FACTS

- ◆ 18+ years in circulation and still going strong
- ◆ 1 million Automated Manifest System (AMS) cards shipped
- ◆ 845 readers deployed worldwide
- ◆ Digital security never compromised
- ◆ Failure rate "virtually zero"
- ◆ Withstands the harshest environments

WITHSTANDS HARSH ENVIRONMENTS

- ◆ Exposed to the elements
- ◆ Laminated card construction contributes to durability
- ◆ Immune to electromagnetic fields
- ◆ Deployed in war zones: Somalia, Bosnia, Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan

SYSTEM-WIDE EFFICIENCIES

- ◆ One card, multiple uses
- ◆ Reduced logistics costs by 67%
- ◆ Slashed receipt processing time by 78%

ENDORSEMENTS

"The most durable and reliable media seen in over 30 years of DoD Logistics experience"
— Eugene (Gene) J. Bransfield, Sr., April 2003



Global Deployment

LaserCard's Credentials Provide Valuable Benefits

- ◆ **High Data Capacity:** The card's high capacity optical security media (2.86 MB) holds all required manifest information and can be updated as needed. Each manifest record uses about 50 to 60 KB so one optical card can be redeployed for multiple shipments.
- ◆ **Cost Effective:** Each card can be reused up to 50 times, reducing the effective cost to about 10 cents per use.
- ◆ **Global Deployment:** The entire U.S. Army distribution and receiving system worldwide, including all active Army field sites, has been outfitted with the ability to read and write optical cards. In war zones, such as Afghanistan, Kuwait, Bosnia and Somalia, 'portable receiving offices' can be dropped in by parachute.
- ◆ **Durability:** The card, which rests outside the shipping container as part of the label, is exposed to the elements and can be in transit for months at a time. The card has withstood harsh weather and conditions worldwide, matching the Army's environmental testing of the card prior to purchase. With a failure rate of virtually zero, this is "the most durable and reliable media seen in over thirty years of DoD Logistics experience," observed Eugene Bransfield, DLA Program Manager.
- ◆ **Compatibility and Ease of Use:** The cards are simple to integrate and use. The DLA database downloads standard files for each shipment, which are directly copied to the card in real time as shipments are prepared. The reading software has been compatible with multiple generations of the Windows® operating system without requiring major new installations.
- ◆ **Reduced Error Rates:** Automatic expedite discrepancy reports minimize labor-intensive operations and reduce errors.

[The cards] "were exposed to 170°F, soaked in salt water for weeks on end, subjected to spills such as strong Navy coffee and even run over with a Bradley infantry vehicle — all to little effect."

— The Defense Logistics Agency

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— Eugene Bransfield, DLA Logistics Program Manager



COMMITTED PARTNER

General Dynamics Information Technology

In 2009, the DLA renewed its contract with General Dynamics Information Technology for 3 years, ensuring the continued success of this ground-breaking program

LASERCARD WORLDWIDE PROGRAMS

- ◆ U.S. Green Card
 - ◆ Saudi Arabia National ID Card
 - ◆ Italian Citizen ID Card
 - ◆ Italian Foreign Resident Card
 - ◆ Italian National Police (Carabinieri) ID Card
 - ◆ Indian State Vehicle Registration Cards
 - ◆ Costa Rica Foreign Resident Card
 - ◆ Angola National ID Card.
- ◆ **Speed:** The card is immediately writeable when inserted into a read/write drive, requiring no lag time to initialize or "spin up." All data is recorded in a few seconds, which is important to get the card attached to each pallet during the depot loading sequence.

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