



Are you Overpaying for Wireless Data Collection Equipment?

The accessibility to real-time data for any manufacturing or distribution operation is critical. Inventory needs to move faster and stay in constant visibility in order for the operation to remain efficient and profitable. For years now, Operations and IT managers have turned to wireless barcode data collection systems for immediate visibility to inventory, purchase orders, and customer orders. These data collection systems are essentially pushing and pulling text-based data: Part Numbers, Quantities, Bin Locations, Lot Numbers, Order Numbers, etc. Early software systems supported mobile devices by treating them like “wireless dumb terminals”. The handheld computers used software to “emulate” these “dumb terminals” and suddenly the warehouse worker was on the move...carrying a wireless handheld barcode scanner, equipped with “terminal emulation software”....all over the warehouse or the shop floor.

Original handheld computers were DOS-based devices equipped with terminal emulation, or “TE”, software. But as the technology wheels have turned, those old devices have in large part gone by the wayside and users have been left with little choice other than to move to more costly, complex devices that run a Windows operating system. The challenges this poses for many companies is that the complexity of Windows devices is far more than what they need to run their warehouses and the cost is more than what they want to pay.

Without exception, most of the processing power and memory on a Windows device is there to support the operating system, or other Windows-based applications that require the a graphical interface like a web browser. Windows is a graphical-based system that really wants a color display with a touch screen. On the low end, a Windows-based device might have a 400 MHz processor with 256 MB of memory. On the high end, processors



have moved past 1GHz. The cost of faster processors, more and faster memory, and color displays starts to add up....and none of it is required to perform basic terminal emulation.

True Cost of Ownership

Not only is the investment cost an issue, but battery life becomes a real issue. The more powerful architecture required by

Windows devices means more power consumption. These devices require either larger, heavier, higher capacity batteries that cost more...or the user is forced to make more frequent battery changes, which means less efficiency.

Now take into account the fact that more expensive devices cost more to repair and to keep in service. At the end of a 5-year run, the cost of ownership of a Windows-based device running terminal emulation software can easily be double that of a non-Windows device. With a higher initial investment, higher cost of operation, and higher cost to maintain, one has to carefully consider the rationale behind buying a Windows device only to "dumb it down" with terminal emulation software.

Choosing the Right Tool

For the millions of users who access, manage and maintain connections to business applications and data via mainframe computers, mid-range servers and VT hosts, terminal emulation is often the simplest, most economical way to access these systems. Many tier one ERP Systems, like SAP using its SAP Console, rely on terminal emulation as their means of supporting mobile devices. The same can be said for WMS and MES software packages of all scales. Terminal

emulation, using software to make a handheld computer perform like a hardware terminal, is still a very popular method used to deploy mainframe-based applications to mobile data capture devices because it is simple to deploy and easy to maintain.

But many industry professionals have discovered a device that is dedicated solely to terminal emulation applications, produced by Texas-based AML, located in the Dallas area. Their "TE Only" device, the Triton, provides the same real-time access to inventory applications, without the "unnecessary bells and whistles" of Windows-based systems. There's minimal overhead in the device, compared to Windows. The Triton preserves precious battery power, memory and microprocessor time because it doesn't run a graphical operating system that's not needed for terminal emulation software. It also contains native terminal emulation clients for VT100, VT220, TN5250, and TN3270 so there's no need to purchase or load additional software on the device.

With the Triton running its native TE applications, users see the same host application screen they would see on a Windows device, or were used to seeing on their old DOS terminals, but benefit from leaner technology that is more cost effective and energy efficient. Ruggedized for use in warehouse environments, the Triton will connect to any Windows, UNIX, i5/OS, or Linux host so they're easily deployed across a range of applications, and because of its minimal power requirements users can expect to use the device for up to 4,000 scans before re-charging the battery...that's one scan every 10 seconds for 11 hours.

Though any Windows device is certainly capable of running terminal emulation software, industry professionals are recognizing that it's "overkill" for routine, warehouse logistics applications. Instead, they're opting for the lower cost and



simplicity of the Triton. It's a simple matter of cost-effectiveness. In an increasingly competitive global economy where profitability is determined by managing costs down to the penny, and where many companies are still feeling the sting of the most serious recession since the great depression, over-paying for anything is not an option.



AML was founded in 1983 to respond to a need in the

barcode data collector marketplace for high performance, easy-to-use, and cost-effective barcode and data collection products. Our goal is to provide sensible solutions for mission critical activities, to improve efficiency and productivity, and to make barcode data collection applications worry-free.

We believe there is more to buying a product, than just the product. It's also the service and support that is available before, during, and after the sale. It's being able to communicate when you need to, and get action and responses that work for you. It means not being at the mercy of anyone, but rather being the recipient of stellar customer service and support. That's AML.

To speak with a sales representative, call **800-648-4452**, or contact us at [**sales@amltd.com**](mailto:sales@amltd.com).

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