



Konica Minolta is a leading manufacturer of copy, scan and print technologies. Konica Minolta UK specialises in the provision of Multi-Functional, Print Production Devices and Optimised Print Solutions, offering specialist support, advice and consultancy to the commercial, public and governmental sectors.

Managing product distribution is a major logistical challenge at Konica Minolta's Essex-based Head Office with thousands of units in distribution each day. To ensure units are delivered efficiently, and that the sites themselves are functioning effectively, warehouse staff use machinery such as forklifts, delivery vehicles and yard sweepers. This equipment requires employees to have the right level of training to ensure the safety of staff as well as the security of vehicles. However, ensuring only the right staff can access the right equipment is a major challenge. To address this, Konica Minolta decided to look at how to better manage access to vehicles by re-evaluating its access management processes.

Dan Tredget, Warehouse and Inventory Manager at Konica Minolta explains:

"As a technology manufacturer, Konica Minolta is known for innovation but our back office processes were not as developed. For example keys were allocated manually and were kept in a key cupboard on-site. The problem is that we have a lot of machinery on site and staff need training to use it. If we're not controlling access to machinery then the concern is that unauthorised staff access machines and risk injury."

"We had a similar management challenge with the MHE fleet. We have a cross-fleet key system which means any key can be used to access any Truck. The idea is that staff don't need to waste time searching the right key, they can jump on the vehicle and complete their task quickly. Manually tracking each key was not working so we began the search for a more intelligent process."

The blueprint for success – automated access management

To address the management challenges of monitoring machinery access and controlling the fork truck fleet, Konica Minolta required an access management system that would automate the process of dispensing and managing keys based on employee access rights. This would improve security and safety, and boost efficiency at the depot by enabling closer control of key and equipment usage. "The search for a suitable management system was painless," added Mr. Tredget. "Although we looked at a number of offerings we quickly decided on Traka. It was clear the secure key cabinets would improve the security of keys to machinery and fork trucks while the automated nature of the solution would also improve the key allocation and authorisation process, saving us valuable management time. Traka's key management system is a way of combining old and new by bringing twenty-first century automation and accountability into the traditional world of physical keys."

The solution sees keys or micro-chipped iFobs used to start up machinery. Working alongside this is Traka's software which lets Konica Minolta upload user profiles for each member of staff. Linked to the key cabinet, each iFob is assigned a specific port within a Traka key cabinet and locked in place until released by an authorised user.

Konica Minolta also uses a new Traka solution, Machine Start,





which isolates the power to machinery, allowing only trained operators to use it. Operators identify themselves to the Traka key cabinet where they are issued an iFob. This has their license and permission levels written to it. The iFob acts as an intelligent key that is inserted into a receptor socket within the Machine Start unit. Providing that user is authorised to operate that piece of machinery, it will power up for use.

To improve accountability, the system records when a key is in use and by whom, storing that information on a central database. Konica Minolta then produces reports for each key showing when it has been used, by whom, and when it was returned. It can also alert management if a key is not returned.

Audited access management addresses health and safety issues

Following project meetings between Traka and Konica Minolta, roll-out took less than a day and Konica Minolta has been reaping the rewards since. First, control of warehouse equipment and vehicles has been drastically improved. Personnel simply cannot use equipment they are not authorised to. As a result, health and safety concerns have been eased. Similarly, the fleet of fork trucks is managed more effectively with the key monitoring software able to tell managers who has which vehicle at any given time. This means they can make sure fork trucks in use are being used by authorised personnel and that, ultimately, the fleet is managed in a way that lets orders be fulfilled without delay.

“Bringing in Traka was designed to improve health and safety and make machines and fleet management more efficient. This is exactly what we have achieved and we’re delighted,” explained Mr. Tredget. “A big part of managing equipment is to ensure staff are accountable for it. With Traka’s key cabinet, Machine Start and auditing software in place, our staff know that when they use a machine or a fork truck, the system logs it. That encourages them to leave equipment in good condition.”

For more information on Traka’s specialist key management and equipment management solutions, please visit [www.traka.com](http://www.traka.com)

A further benefit is that user profiles uploaded to the Traka system contain training details for all staff. This alerts managers when machine licences need to be renewed and staff re-trained, avoiding time-intensive manual tracking of staff qualifications.

“The automated nature of the Traka system has also provided benefits that we hadn’t really considered before the system was installed,” added Mr. Tredget. “We hoped it would ease safety concerns and boost warehouse efficiency but management issues like staff training have also been improved. The time this saves is considerable and means managers can be on-site managing rather than being stuck in an office. As a result, the entire management system is now critical to the management of the warehouse.”

Following the success of the access management system, Konica Minolta is considering installing Traka’s dock door anti drive-off system. By using the Traka iFob attached to the vehicle keys, and through automated dock door control, delivery lorries are prevented from being driven away before the dock door is closed and safely secured. The aim is to reduce accidents and therefore further improve health and safety standards.



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