

# **RADLEY & CO. SIGNS NEW WMS CONTRACT WITH CHESS**

**Radley & Co., the UK's largest producer of leather handbags and accessories, has selected the Empirica warehouse management system from Chess Logistics Technology for use at its brand new distribution centre in Milton Keynes. Chess has implemented Empirica with its Task-RF module to enable wireless communication with hand-held RF terminals so that Radley can manage its warehouse operations in real time and with enhanced accuracy.**

“Chess demonstrated an understanding of the logistics world and was able to design a solution that matched our requirements rather than forcing us to do things in a proprietary way,” says Justin Murphy, Operations Director at Radley & Co. “They proposed solutions to issues that other potential suppliers thought might be a problem.”

Radley & Co. was established in London in 1975 and has taken a classic approach to styling fused with the best of contemporary fashion trends to ensure that its comprehensive range of handbags, travel goods, wallets and purses remain a popular choice. The company has grown to become the UK's largest manufacturer of leather handbags and accessories with a brand portfolio that now includes Radley, Tula and Hidesign. It is a design-led company with a reputation for commitment to quality and value for money. Products are sold through major high street chains as well as numerous independent retailers throughout the UK.

Continued growth and expansion of the product range meant that Radley & Co. had outgrown its existing warehouse facility in Willesden, London by 2004. The company decided to relocate its distribution operations to a brand new warehouse in Milton Keynes which opened in the spring of 2005. The new warehouse covers 45,000 square feet (4200 square metres) and contains 5000 pallet and 9000 shelf storage locations. The old warehouse had been managed using paper-based systems but Radley recognised that these would no longer be appropriate in the new operation.

“We decided we needed a warehouse management system to keep track of the growing number of products and orders for our increasing customer base,” says Justin Murphy. “We looked at a number of potential suppliers and selected Chess from a shortlist of three.”

Chess implemented its Empirica warehouse management system with the Task-RF module to interface with 18 hand held radio data terminals used by Radley & Co.'s warehouse operatives to control all stock movements including receipts, putaway and order picking. Staff follow instructions issued by Empirica to the hand held terminals and confirm actions and task completion by entering basic details and pressing appropriate keys.

Using Empirica in conjunction with RF provides Radley & Co. with a powerful but flexible solution to its warehouse management requirements. The application's wide range of functions are designed to support every warehouse task and provide a complete solution for supply chain integration. These capabilities are enhanced with RF because data can be scanned and processed with high accuracy to provide access to real time inventory and stock information while eliminating the need for paper based processes.

"This is our first proper warehouse management system and it allows us to find items more easily and accurately," says Justin Murphy. "Because it's new we have had to redesign the whole logistics process."

One area where Empirica has proved especially useful is managing single item orders. Unlike many warehouse operations Radley & Co. often breaks palletised loads and cartons down to individual items. Some of the warehouse management systems the company assessed did not have facilities to cope with this type of stock management.

"The other systems we looked at could not cope with breaking loads to a sub-carton level," says Justin Murphy. "But Empirica is able to track single items whenever we want."

Empirica covers all key elements of warehouse management and has been designed for ease of use and rapid implementation for in-house, third party and contract based operations using conventional, RF or voice-based applications. Empirica is designed to provide a wide range of powerful standard and web-based interface capabilities to offer the optimum solution for supply chain integration by providing customers and partners access to real time inventory and stock information..

Chess Logistics Technology Limited has provided software for logistics and distribution applications for more than twenty years and is recognised as a specialist in its field. The company has an extensive client list of national and international companies.

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