It's not the scale, …. It's the data!

The Upstate of South Carolina has some great manufacturing facilities. We still make stuff here! This application story is about one of our facilities here in the Upstate. This facility manufactures discrete parts. In order to get the 100% Aseptic rating, a major portion of the production takes place in a Class I Clean room facility. This customer had a need for a Counting Application. The ID7 count Pac with CB Base was a good fit, because – it had the look of equipment required for a clean room, had a great big display, and the CB Base provided a nice large surface for counting their product. Our customer purchased 12 of the units over the past three years.

Last year, the manufacturing engineer, Kevin, came to me indicating they received a customer complaint about a count shortage in one of their products. Kevin asked me – "how could this happen with the equipment we purchased, and how can it be prevented from happening in the future."

My answer to Kevin was surprising at first. I told Kevin that his customer complaint had nothing to do with the equipment he was using but had everything to do with his lack of information! You see, the process was not collecting any data, and therefore had nothing to analyze which would indicate where the problem was being created. Kevin told me he had no intention of installing a computer for each of his 12 stations. I indicated to him – that we would not require any PC's in the area – but could introduce the information onto his company Network. His response – "I need a proposal".

From taking the ID7 Advanced Connectivity Class offered by Mettler Toledo last year, I learned of a lot of capabilities in the ID7 that I did not know were there. The class taught me about the capabilities within the hardware of the ID7 – as well as how I could use them in an application.

In order to collect meaning full data for this application, I relied on the custom print template of the ID7 and the on-board memory capability of the ID7 Count Pac. By providing the Customer the free Count Tool application, the customer was able to program a database of information that included his Product ID, Product Description and File APW. The customer's application requires that the operator take a new sample for every Lot. This is because the product variation is too great to use a File APW. The operator process is very straight forward. The operator hits the "A" key and enters the Product ID, followed by enter. The ID7 displays the product ID entered, followed by the description stored in the ID7 memory. This insures that the operator entered the proper Product ID.

The Operator then presses the "B" key – and enters the Lot # to be used, followed by the "C" Key and enters the Operator Associate Number – identifying the operator. Then the operator samples the proper count of wipes, and the ID7 updates the APW on file for that Product ID. After each bag of wipes is completed the operator presses the Transfer Key.

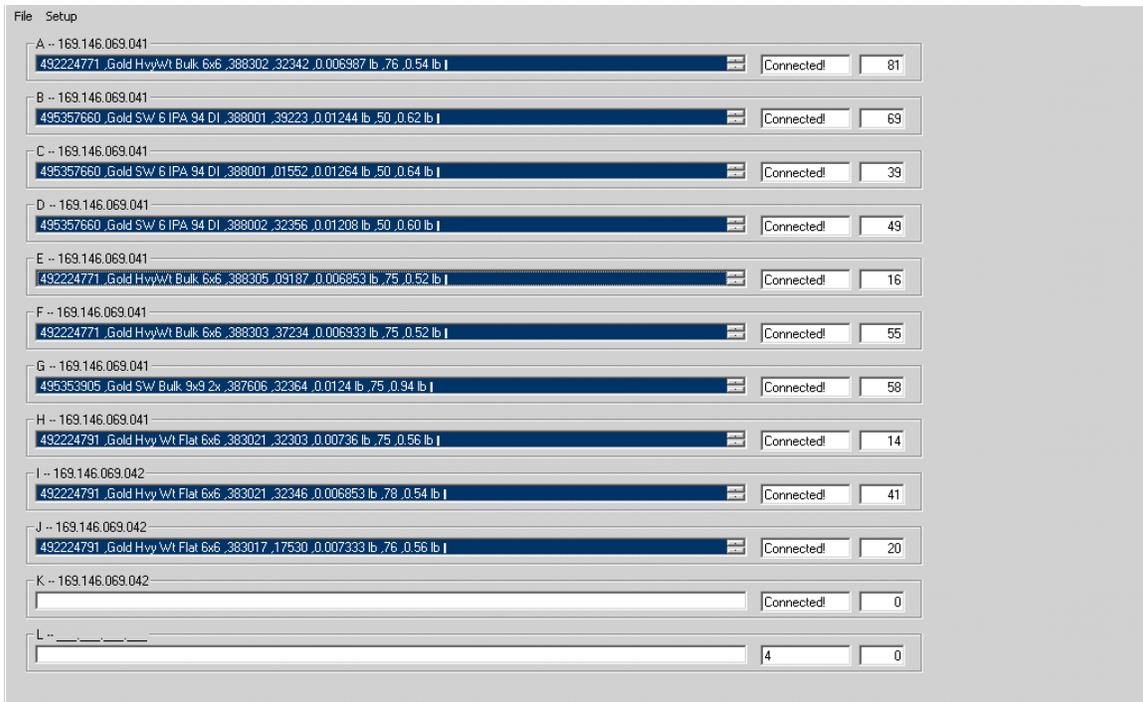**It's not the scale, …. It's the data!**

The Custom Print Template in the ID7 has been programmed to output the required data when the transfer key has been pressed. Following is the ID7 programmed data string.

 495353930 , LAZERCUT Part, 123401 , 12345 , IZ14-0-0305   , 0.01564 lb , 468 , 7.32 lb ,TIME   05.25.26 PM ,DATE   03.31.06

This represents the product ID, Description, Lot #, Associate #, Serial Number of ID7, calculated APW, Count, Gross Weight, Time and Date.

In order to introduce this information onto the network and then subsequently to a database, we used a Serial to Network Multiplexer from Comtrol. The Device Master Pro 8 Port allows us to connect serial cables from eight ID7 to this device. The Port has one TCPIP Network Address. This saves the customer on network hardware – connecting eight devices to one Network Address. In addition the multiplexer acts as the traffic cop buffering the data insuring one transmission of data at time.

A data collection application was developed, to execute a Socket connection to the Comtrol. Following picture shows the data from 12 ID7's being introduced to the database.

The screen allows us to see a positive connection to the individual ID7 device, as well as the number of data transmissions. This is excellent for trouble shooting!

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We then designed a Visual Basic Front end for reporting. This allows the operator to easily enter their Associate number and extract the production that was created by that operator. Here is a picture of the VB Front End.
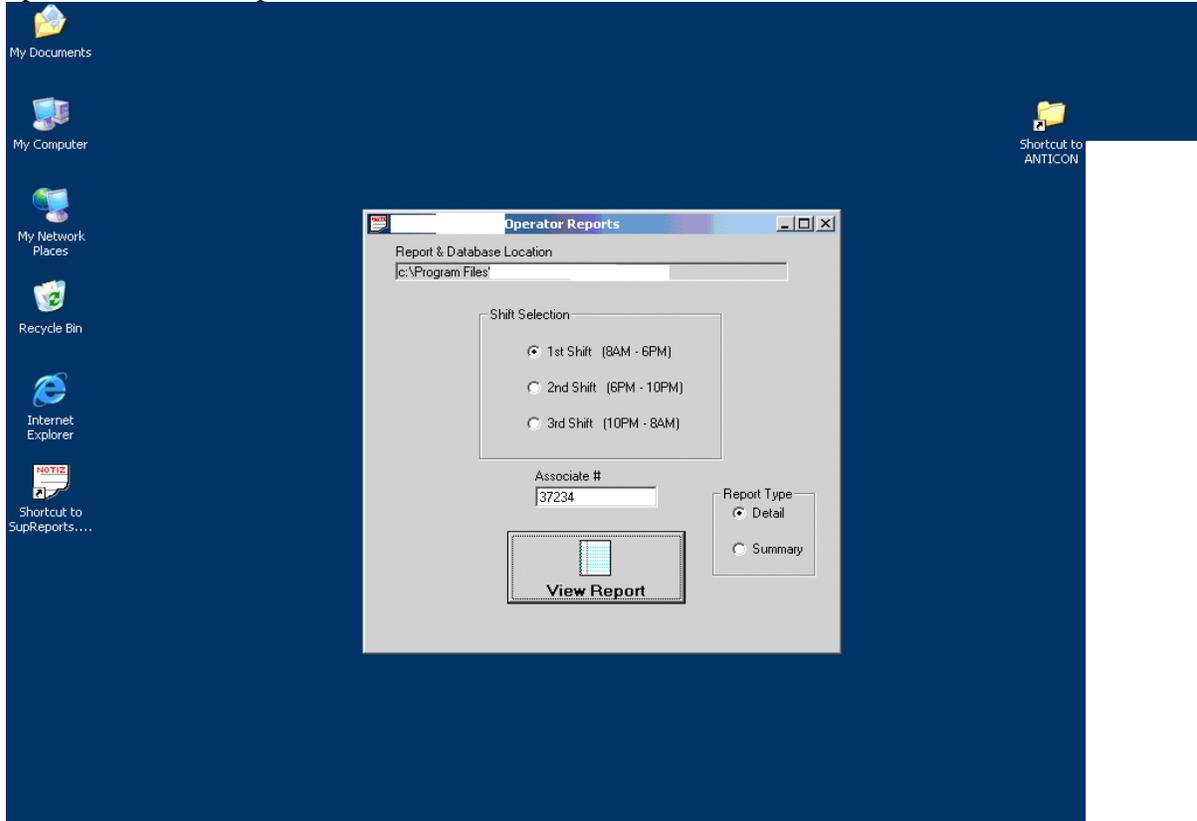
In summary, I would not have been able to complete this application if:

1. The ID 7 did not have the capabilities in it.
2. Had I not attended the ID7 Advanced Communication Class
3. Had I not had such a talented programming staff available to me.

The customer is amazingly satisfied. This will be sure to generate additional orders for ID7 units as the application expands.

Thanks for listening!

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