



# Applications

## CASE STUDIES



How do you manage the supply chain fulfillment requirements for a multi state utility company? Integrated Visual Systems has the answer.



An automated inventory control and order tracking system interfaced to the corporate ERP system.

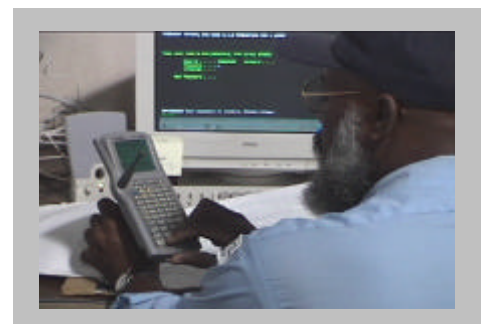
Piedmont Natural Gas Company is an energy and services company primarily engaged in the transportation, distribution and sale of natural gas to over 690,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. The Charlotte-based Company is the second-largest natural gas utility in the Southeast. An unregulated subsidiary of the Company is a 30% equity participant in a venture that markets natural gas to an additional 560,000 customers in Georgia, the first state in the venture's eight-state region to deregulate retail natural gas service. Another unregulated subsidiary is a 20% equity participant in Heritage Propane Partners, L.P., the nation's fourth-largest propane distributor serving more than 490,000 customers in twenty-eight states.

Because they are involved with the sale and distribution of merchandise, materials, supplies and parts for eleven (11) operating districts, PNG has an extensive inventory to maintain. Their host ERP software is from American Software and runs on an IBM 9021/732 mainframe. The mainframe system worked well for Order Processing and Accounting but did not provide real-time warehouse management capability and barcoding.

The goal of the project was to automate the data collection processes for the warehouses. Among the transactions included in the project were Purchase Order Receiving, Stocking, Issues, Returns to Stock, Order Picking, Order Loading, Warehouse Transfer and Cycle Count. Transactions performed in the main distribution warehouses (Charlotte, NC and Nashville, TN) are performed utilizing a network of real-time RF terminals. The smaller district warehouses operate with batch terminals.

Data is validated as it is collected. For instance, when goods are received

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against a Purchase Order, the receipt is validated against a file of available open Purchase Orders. The accuracy of this file is maintained through the interface between the host ERP system and the data collection system. In the same way, validation files are maintained for material request (MR), item product master, cycle count, etc.

A function of the PO Receiving process is to generate barcoded product labels for the goods received. Once the items are labeled, the operator can scan the product



number and will be directed to the suggested put-away location. The summary receiving report informs the supervisor of items received but not yet located.



Order picking has become a paperless operation through the use of on-line RF terminals. Pick list are assigned to the pickers by the supervisor from a PC screen. Once the operator boots up his terminal, the system steps him through his orders and confirms that the right item and quantity is picked for each order. Once the order is staged, a load function is used to move the items onto the truck and confirm that the pick was accurate.

Numerous inquiry screens and reports provide up to the minute information for supervision. Of particular interest are the exception reports. The stocking exception report notifies the supervisor when the quantity of an item stocked for a receipt varies from the quantity received. There are also picking exceptions, loading exceptions, cycle count exceptions, etc.

## About Integrated Visual Systems

Integrated Visual System's primary focus is to deliver world class solutions to meet our clients automated data collection (ADC) requirements. To meet these specific requirements, we maintain a full development staff in-house. Both standard packages and custom designed applications are written and supported.

IVS provides a resource for companies who wish to implement integrated data collection (DC) systems without the expense of having a specialist on staff. With our years of experience in the design, installation, and support of DC systems, we can help companies realize the full potential of the data collection equipment available on the market today. IVS develops DC systems for a variety of industries including manufacturing, textiles, apparel, furniture and distribution.

We specialize in the development of real-time data collection applications which provide a "queued real-time" host interface. IVS offers on site installation and training, complete hardware and software technical support, and RMA service.

In essence, IVS is a systems integrator providing turnkey data collection solutions with an emphasis on service and support. Various application write-ups and case studies are available. Please be sure to contact us to discuss your specific requirements.

## IVS.Manufacturing Application Suite

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- IVS.Inspection
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Please make inquiries to:

Integrated Visual Systems, Inc.  
1207-E Crews Road  
Matthews, NC 28105  
Tel (704) 847-3379  
Fax (704) 847-4655  
[www.ivsi.com](http://www.ivsi.com)