

WORD FROM WASHINGTON



Mail And Package Tracking: More Important Than Ever

(NAPSA)—Do you know where your mail has been? These days it's more important than ever to know who has tracked your mail and when they tracked it.

Fortunately, new technology simplifies the process of mail and package tracking. Tracking is more important than ever given the recent number of confirmed reports of anthrax traced to incoming items received at several U.S. companies.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), headquartered in Atlanta, GA, is the lead federal agency for protecting the health and safety of American citizens.

Along with the FBI, this agency of the Department of Health & Human Services is at the forefront of investigations into the possibility that bioterrorism was involved in the recent anthrax cases.

To effectively carry out their investigations, the CDC purchased an intelligent parcel tracking device, Ascom's Smart Track. With this system, Ascom Hasler Mailing Systems has now taken the "sorting" technology to a higher level. In addition to voice recognition technology, this system adds signature capture.

Smart Track can track items, locate people and print a variety of reports allowing a manager to take control of the internal delivery process, by better managing the incoming flow of items and providing more efficient service.

Perhaps even more importantly, Smart Track adds a level of



New mail sorting technology delivers information.

security and accountability to incoming packages that is particularly critical in these turbulent times.

"Within a company, Smart Track will trace an item from the moment it reaches a building until it gets to its final destination, including the date, time and name of every individual who touched the package," said Lance Reed, vice-president of Alternative Mailing & Shipping, which sold the Smart Track to the CDC. Outside a company, Smart Track can even identify the sender under certain shipping modes.

Consider the recent anthrax exposures at the mail centers of American Media, Inc., the major television networks and several other government institutions, where it has been suggested that the potentially deadly virus could have entered the buildings via contaminated mail.

By using Smart Track, said

Reed, authorities would have had the ability to immediately identify all employees who handled the affected mail pieces.

In cases like these, time is of the essence to initiate antibiotic treatment. In this type of situation, Smart Track can transcend its role as a tracking device and become a real lifesaver.

The system uses a wireless receiving scanner to log the carrier name and delivery date into the system.

The system operator speaks the recipient's name and the receiving screen identifies the recipient and automatically sets up delivery routing.

This special alert screen identifies time-critical deliveries with e-mail capabilities. A signature capture device or a signature pad enables delivery verification.

Custom management reports provide chargeback accounting data and productivity information.

The system is easy to learn and use. It takes employees as little as 10 minutes to start tripling productivity.

Another Ascom tracking system is the IntelliTouch mail processor with Internet access for tracking mail through the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Confirmation service. The company holds patents on an exclusive, closed system mailing system featuring the USPS' information-based-indicia technology.

For more information on this system, visit www.ascomhasler.com.