Helix® On-Site Stocking
Smarter, Easier Inventory Management for Storerooms

Promega Corporation
Contact us: www.promega.com/helix

Challenge: Automate inventory tracking and integrate with a customized eProcurement system.

Solution: Helix® RFID-enabled on-site stocking eliminated manual entry of recieved product and automatically tracked inventory. Custom integration with the MedStore eProcurement system allowed seamless automation of the entire process.

Benefits:

- Fast, swipe-card access to products
- Reduced paperwork—no need to "recieve" or reorder product
- Easy delivery of product documentation to customers
- Fewer storage errors

MedStore, a large research supply company, recently added three Helix® on-site stocking units to their storeroom. Helix® units provide easy access to products and seamlessly integrate with MedStore's custom eProcurement system, allowing them to serve customers more efficiently while reducing the burden of administrative tasks.

"Other systems involve far more manual processes. The Helix program saves MedStore money by eliminating human error and reducing the amount of manual work needed. As a result, we see more sales and serve the community better."
—Mike Scott, MedStore Director.

The MedStore Story

MedStore is one of the largest research supply facilities in North America, serving universities, hospitals and biotechnology companies in the Discovery District of downtown Toronto. Owned and operated by the University of Toronto, MedStore provides products and services to more than 2,000 customers.

MedStore strives to add value for customers by providing fast and dependable service. They maintain a large on-site inventory available for immediate delivery or pickup, and also provide an extensive online selection of special order products that can be delivered within a few days. End-user scientists and customer procurement departments appreciate the convenience, elimination/reduction of shipping costs, and value pricing offered through MedStore.

The Challenges of Inventory Management—Cost Control without Added Bureaucracy

Challenges faced by MedStore include the need to keep operating costs low while seeking innovative ways to manage and maintain inventory and eliminate error. They are continually looking for better ways to track receipt and storage of products, to minimize the need for manual data entry to their eProcurement system and to make it easier for their staff to deliver the right products to their customers in a timely manner.

The Helix® Solution—Easy Product Access and Tracking with Reduced Admin Burden

In 2013, MedStore began using Helix® refrigerator, freezer and ambient storage units to store and manage inventory of their Promega products. MedStore staff access the Helix® units directly with the swipe of a card, and interact with the system using a simple, touchscreen interface. Helix® RFID technology provides a

paperless, keyless system that automatically tracks inventory, including reordering products as needed.

"It was a flawless Integration" Mike Scott, Director of MedStore, says. "I am seeing more Promega sales and serving the community better". He specifically cites the following benefits of the Helix® implementation:

- **Reduced Chance of Human Error:** Cold storage products can all look similar and be mistakenly placed at the wrong storage temperature. The Helix® system provides the ability to validate the location and storage temperature of each product, reducing the chance of product loss through improper storage.

- **Less Time Spent on Administrative Tasks:** Automatic inventory tracking and integration with the MedStores system means there is no need to manually "receive" items, and product is automatically re-ordered when inventory is low. This means less manual order entry, and less administrative work for MedStore staff.

- **Simplified Document Management:** The ability to send product documentation (protocols and MSDS) directly to customers using the touchscreen interface provides a value-added service.

"MedStore storeroom staff use the touchscreen to see what is in the Helix and where. They also use it to send information about product use and safety to the researchers who are our customers."

Custom Integration with eProcurement Systems

The ability to seamlessly connect Helix® with MedStore's custom-built eProcurement system eliminates numerous manual processes, from product receipt to order entry and fulfillment. Integrating Helix® with the MedStore system saves MedStore personnel time and makes the whole process easier.

"I find that Promega can be more innovative and flexible than competitor companies," Scott says. Scott appreciated direct access to the Promega team working on the integration, and the team quickly developed a solution to specifically meet MedStore's requirements.

The Helix® Advantage: With Helix® units, there are no capital investments or inventory requirements. Organizations can customize the Helix® on-site stocking program to meet their needs. MedStore was able to use Helix® to create a solution that enhances their storeroom and fully integrates with their inventory management and eProcurement systems. The swipe-card access and touchscreen interface made the system easy to use for their employees, and helped them reduce administration cost through time savings (by eliminating manual processes) and by reducing "shrinkage" costs.