



Intelligent Messaging Application

Materials Management Yard Management Systems
Warehouse Management Systems

The Benefits

Warehouse Management Systems (WMS) and Yard Management Systems (YMS) provide large amounts of information about warehouse and shipping activities – stock levels, shipping schedules, dock status, alarm conditions. Productivity clearly improves when this information reaches the right people quickly and efficiently. Smart Alec® interfaces with WMS and YMS software, delivering important information to employees, supervisors, and management where and when they need it via PowerView™ LED displays, alphanumeric pagers, email, and other output communication devices. When Smart Alec enhances the dissemination of critical warehouse information, productivity improves because of reduced confusion, improved inventory tracking, decreased response time to exception conditions, and enhanced employee morale (employees can better track their successes).

The Applications

Inventory Management

Smart Alec enhances inventory management when it notifies buyers via displays and pagers that incoming inspection has revealed problems or damage to inventory. If inventory flow is disrupted at any point in the distribution cycle, a page alerts the supervisor. In companies with one-day inventory turns or just-in-time shipping, Smart Alec increases the visibility of WMS stock level status by sending an email to affected individuals when the stock level of a given item falls below a pre-determined level of 50%. If the stock level drops below 25%, Smart Alec sends a page to alert the right people.

Dock Status

In order to expedite shipments, Smart Alec forwards status messages to PowerView LED displays situated next to each dock door. These messages include some or all of the following: door number, loader, warehouse, purpose, job or route number, load priority, status, percent completion, departure time, and count down. One large LED display is located at a central location to provide summary information including each door number and the loading status. If events are performed on time, these signs will display completion statistics. If events are delayed, warning messages flash. If loading nears or has exceeded departure time, a red message indicates that demurrage charges may occur. At this point, a pager alerts the dock supervisor to the exception condition indicating the dock door number.

Traffic Logistics

Smart Alec can also facilitate a reduction in traffic and carrier personnel in the yard. For example, during the check-in process, each driver receives a pager. Smart Alec updates a PowerView display located outside of the dock door with vessel ID number, carrier name, driver name, and a count down. Once his vessel is staged, Smart Alec pages the driver to move his vessel to the dock door number indicated in the page. The driver is again paged to return to the dock and remove his vessel when loading is complete.

Dock Exceptions

A WMS or YMS may send critical status information to Smart Alec, which, in turn, identifies required actions, alarm conditions, and processing exceptions. When these occur, Smart Alec notifies the right individuals via pagers and/or email. Status and resolution of these events are posted for all to see on a centrally located PowerView status board. Events that may cause Smart Alec to “sound” the alarm include:

- A vessel contains hot material or a hot indicator is set during check-in.
- When a “live” vessel checks in, a request is sent to release a shipping order.
- More than the maximum vessels for a given carrier have checked in.
- An unknown or lost vessel is discovered during a vessel count.
- A vessel's state changes to “unavailable.”
- Vessel loading or unloading is suspended.
- The temperature rises above or below an acceptable range while a vessel is awaiting unloading or checkout (after having been loaded).
- A broken or different seal is reported.

Implementation

The diagram on the reverse side illustrates the process by which Smart Alec receives dock door information from a WMS and forwards it to PowerView displays and pagers.



Smart Alec
The Smart Choice for Intelligent Messaging.



Smart Alec Application Sheet — Materials Management

an example of a manufacturer using a Warehouse Management System

