

# VELOCITY VIDEO CASE HISTORY

A DC VELOCITY SPEED CHALLENGE

Featuring Progistix  
Presented by Motorola

## Dialed-up distribution

Canadian 3PL Progistix moves to Motorola mobile computers equipped with Voxware voice software to pick telecommunications equipment for Bell.

IT HAS BEEN MORE THAN 130 YEARS SINCE Canadian Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone, revolutionizing the way the world uses voice to communicate. Today, the Canadian company that bears his name is benefiting from a newer type of voice technology.

Progistix, a member of SCI Group Inc. and one of Canada's largest third-party logistics providers, handles distribution for Bell, Canada's largest telephone and telecommunications company. The Progistix facility in Toronto uses the Voxware 3 voice-directed picking system to select parts and supplies used by technicians in the field. Voxware 3 is an adaptive voice software product that operates on Motorola WT4090 wearable mobile computers. The Motorola computers are worn as belt packs or on the forearm and are connected to headsets equipped with microphones that allow workers to hear commands and then speak responses back to the voice system. Voxware 3's speech recognition software interprets the responses to confirm that the work has been performed properly before directing workers to their next tasks.

"As a 3PL, we want innovative solutions for our clients that improve performance and eliminate costs. That sets us apart from our competitors," explains Shari Pedersen, director of operations. "With voice, we see efficiency gains over people selecting with RF handheld units. It allows our workers to be more organized overall."

At the Toronto facility, which Progistix moved into in 2007, the Voxware software and the Motorola mobile computers combine to provide fast and accurate picking of products, tools and consumables. These include a variety of electronic parts, small coils of wire, ladders, fuses and more – items that will be delivered overnight to Bell's Work Centres and Central Offices across Ontario and Quebec. The parts allow technicians to perform new installations and service existing equipment.

### Sound performance

Speed is extremely important to operations at the Progistix facility. Orders received during the day begin shipping at 6:00 p.m. That means that there needs to be quick processing for many products.

"We are under the gun with our tight shipping schedule," says

Pedersen. "We need devices with high reliability, and we have that with Motorola."

While Progistix is currently using the Motorola computers to do voice picking, the units also have the capability to scan and capture data, as well as perform other screen-based functions. This versatility gives Progistix added flexibility for the future.

Parts are selected as cluster picks, with workers instructed to select items for several orders at once. The system builds the clusters based on order profiles and to optimize the picking process. The voice system then instructs the pickers to divide the gathered items into order totes situated on rolling carts.



"Voice helps us maximize our throughput," notes Nick Gaganiaras, senior manager, Internet services. "In our previous facility, we had difficulties managing fluctuating volumes. Voice gives us flexibility to accommodate our changing volumes and product mix, while meeting strict departure times."

Voice also provides hands-free and eyes-free operation. Workers no longer have to hold RF handheld units while they are trying to lift cartons, and their eyes are always on the products to be picked instead of glancing to read instructions on a screen. As a result, Progistix has seen significant improvement in productivity since moving to voice, and picking accuracies are now better than 99.9 percent. Higher accuracy and greater productivity have translated into improved customer satisfaction through best-in-class on-time performance and reduced supply chain costs for Bell.

"Voice creates a momentum for the pickers to continually keep them on track and productive," adds Pedersen. "Employee feedback has also been very positive. Voice users like having their hands free throughout the entire picking process."

Sounds like Progistix made the right call for its client.

For more information on Motorola, call (800) 833-9788 or visit [www.motorola.com/enterprise](http://www.motorola.com/enterprise).

To learn more about Voxware, go to [www.voxware.com](http://www.voxware.com).

For more information on SCI Group and Progistix, visit [www.scigroup.com](http://www.scigroup.com) and [www.progistix.com](http://www.progistix.com).

To watch a short video showing operations at the Progistix distribution center in Toronto, go to [www.dcelocity.com](http://www.dcelocity.com) and click on the Velocity Video Speed Challenge.

