

CASE STUDY:

# Schwing America, Inc.

**RFgen**

## OVERVIEW

*Global manufacturer of concrete construction equipment improves the reliability, accuracy, responsiveness and flexibility of mobile data collection using RFgen Mobile Foundations for SAP.*



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### SNAPSHOT

INDUSTRY:

Construction Equipment  
Manufacturing

ENVIRONMENT:

SAP 6.0

APPLICATIONS:

- Inventory Management
- Warehouse Management

## GOALS ACHIEVED

- 1 Improve picking efficiency by 42% and accuracy to 99.83%.
- 2 Simplified cycle counts thus saving time.
- 3 Improve reliability and accuracy over their legacy system and eliminate latency issues.
- 4 Gain better insights into labor usage on the shop floor.
- 5 Direct workers through the warehouse to increase efficiency of putaway.

“We’ve increased our picking efficiency by 42% in the course of just four months—it now stands at 94%.”

- Ken Meyers, Director Information Systems  
Schwing America, Inc.

## THE CHALLENGE

Schwing America operates a 40-acre facility with seven buildings to support its manufacturing plant and has used the SAP ERP system for many years. Warehouse and plant personnel collected data and performed warehouse transactions using mobile barcode scanners and a legacy data collection system put in place in 2004, but as that system aged, it became increasingly unreliable.

“As the system aged out, four areas became serious constraints for us: reliability, latency,

lack of functionality and the absence of a true development platform,” said Meyers. “Every day it seemed like there was a non-stop line of guys walking into the technical support area with locked up barcode scanners. We also had a big latency problem. After a scan, you might have to wait five or six seconds for it to respond. As the company grew, we needed additional functionally to enhance efficiency, but we did not have a development platform, so we would have to continually go back to the manufacturer for any

modifications or new transaction solutions.”

## THE SOLUTION

The implementation team evaluated several solutions, ultimately choosing RFgen Mobile Foundations for SAP. A suite of pre-written, SAP-validated data collection solutions that feature real-time, bi-directional information exchange with SAP. RFgen supports real-time wireless barcoding and mobile enterprise application development to improve efficiency in manufacturing and warehouse operations.

“Our number one requirement for third-party software is that it’s SAP-certified. We also looked at RFgen’s installed base and tried to draw a parallel between our business needs and some of their current users. Our strategy lined up well with the RFgen product offering,” said Meyers.

RFgen’s Sr. SAP Consultant spent a few days on the shop floor to document Schwing’s business requirements to ensure the most effective transactions to automate for Schwing’s operations.

“RFgen did a great job from start to completion, and they put the right people on the project. All too often, you get only the technical person on

the project, and what you ideally like to have is a resource that has a balance of sound technical skills and a good understanding of the business processes. RFgen provided a clear understanding of the application and architectural structure coupled with a well-structured project plan,” Meyers recalled.

“The project went smoothly with excellent collaboration. Overall, it was an absolute win for our company!”

- Ken Meyers, Director Information Systems  
Schwing America, Inc.

## THE RESULTS

### RFgen Simplifies Routine Tasks

One of the surprises delivered with RFgen is that automating relatively small routine tasks made a huge difference to the warehouse employees. “Our workers love being able to scan or type in a material number and see material availability throughout the facility on their wireless devices. They really raved about that ability, because before they had to go to an SAP workstation,” explained Meyers.

### RFgen Empowers Future In-house Development

In addition to providing superior reliability and accuracy,

RFgen also provides a mobile development platform.

“As our business continues to grow, we will receive new requirements and we need to be able to provide a viable solution moving forward. With RFgen, we can do that in-house with minimal effort and that is a win-win, for the company and the business units we support. We wanted to have some control over our own destiny and to be flexible enough to support the business without making big projects out of every request,” said Meyers.

Meyers was very pleased with the on time, on budget deployment of RFgen and concluded, “It was a great experience. The people at RFgen know the value of having a good business relationship with their clients. They produce a solid solution, and we have a great relationship with their developers. The project went smoothly with excellent collaboration. Overall, it was an absolute win for our company.”



## ABOUT SCHWING AMERICA, INC.

Schwing America, Inc.—part of Schwing Group—is a leading, global manufacturer of concrete construction equipment, with production facilities on four continents. In order to increase efficiency through automation, Ken Meyers, Director of Information Systems, deployed RFgen Mobile Foundations for SAP in the company’s primary manufacturing facility for North America located in Saint Paul, Minnesota.