After working as an employee of a large international courier and shipping service, Bill Wiley decided to open his own courier delivery company called On the Spot.

Bill began by listing his mobile telephone number in the Yellow Pages and advertising in local newspapers. He also began using social media for advertising and marketing activities to promote his services.

On the Spot courier services grew and changed over the years. At first, Bill received requests for package pickups on his mobile phone, recorded that information in a log, and would then drive around to retrieve all the packages later in the day.

However, it was not long before his customers were asking if he had a web site where they could place orders for shipments. He knew that if he could get a web presence that he could increase his exposure and help his business grow.

He soon discovered that with more drivers, it was difficult to coordinate pickups between the two of them from his van. So, he hired a warehouse as a central location. Then, he stayed in the warehouse himself, and his two employees made all the pickups and deliveries. This worked well because he could control and coordinate the pickups and deliveries better. It was also easier for him to receive pickup requests working at a desk rather than trying to do it while driving a delivery van. As he thought about how his business was growing and the services he provided to his customers, Bill began to itemize the kinds of information he would need to maintain.

When Bill got an order, only on his phone at first, he recorded when he received the call and when the shipment would be ready for pickup. Sometimes, customers wanted immediate pickup; sometimes, they were calling to schedule a later time in the day for pickup.

Once he arrived at the pickup location, Bill collected the packages. It was not uncommon for the customer to have several packages for delivery. In addition to the name and address of the delivery location, he also recorded the time of pickup. He noted the desired delivery time, the location of the delivery, and the weight of the package to determine the courier cost. When he picked up the package, he printed out a label with his portable printer that he kept in the delivery van.

The delivery of a package was fairly simple. Upon delivery, he would record information about when the delivery was made and who received it. Because some of the packages were valuable, it was necessary in those instances to have someone sign for the package upon delivery.

Of course, he needed to maintain information about his customers. Some of his customers were businesses; some were individuals. He needed to have basic address and contact information for every customer. Bill required customers to pay at the time of pickup. When payments were received, he needed to record information about the payment: type of payment (cash/check/bank deposit), date, and amount. Although this was not a sophisticated billing and payment system, Bill thought it would suffice for his needs. Bill also doesn't want his website to handle payments as he is happy to record the payments in the system manually.

Next, he started thinking about his packages and shipments. At the time that a request for a pickup came in, he needed to keep track of it as some type of delivery request or delivery order. At that point in time, Bill mostly needed to know who the customer was, where the pickup location was, and what date and time the package(s) would be ready for pickup. He also recorded the date and time that he received the order. A delivery order was considered "open" until the delivery van arrived at the pickup location and the packages were all retrieved. At that point, the delivery order was satisfied.

Once the packages were retrieved, each package needed to be uniquely identified. Bill needed to know when it was picked up and which delivery person picked it up. Other important information was the "deliver to" entity name and the address. He also needed to identify the type of delivery. Some packages were high priority, requiring same-day delivery. Others were overnight. Of course, the weight and cost were recorded so the customer could pay at the time of delivery.

In the courier and delivery business, one of the most important information requirements is the date and time stamp. For each package, it is important to know when it was picked up, when it arrived at the warehouse, when it went back out on the delivery run, and when it was delivered. When possible, it is also important to have names associated with each of these events.