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Poultry Processing Plant Increases Productivity, Eliminates Errors and Meets OSHA Requirements With Existing ID Credentials

The poultry processing business today is more complex, high-risk and demanding than ever before. Stricter regulatory demands, skyrocketing prices and critical food safety issues continue to present growing challenges. At the same time, management is always looking for ways to increase efficiency and productivity while maintaining the highest levels of worker safety.

Using rf IDEAS® contactless authentication solutions, this major poultry processor simplified secure access to its production equipment, eliminated the need for password resets, and put an end to unauthorized employee practices that were posing a threat to regulatory compliance and plant safety.

THE CHALLENGE
Safety gloves prevent easy computer log-in

In the hazardous environment of a meat processing plant, production line employees are required by law to wear protective clothing, including safety shoes or boots with toe guards and slip-resistant soles, as well as protective gloves to help reduce the spread of infectious disease.

However, while the gloves helped protect workers at a large North American processing plant, the thickness and lack of tactile sensitivity sometimes created a problem. Authorized employees responsible for operating automated machinery on the production floor needed to type an alphanumeric password into the keyboard of a computer terminal in order to gain access. The heavy safety gloves rendered this process cumbersome and lengthy.

Employees also found it nearly impossible to successfully log in with a single attempt. As with many password-secured terminals, the system was designed to lock the user out after three incorrect attempts. The employee would then have to call the help desk to ask someone to reset the password. This created a drain on resources and productivity both for the production line employee and the help desk representative.

In some cases, employees would become so frustrated that they would remove their protective gloves and log in with exposed skin. This was not only a safety issue for the employee, it was an OSHA violation and represented a serious liability to the company.

THE SOLUTION

WAVE ID® Writer and WAVE ID® Playback from rf IDEAS

With employee frustration at an all-time high, management contacted an rf IDEAS partner to review the process, provide consultation and recommend a solution.

After observing and understanding the workers' attempts to log in to the computer and noting that all employees have ID cards, the partner recommended the WAVE ID Writer and WAVE ID Playback solution from rf IDEAS.

The WAVE ID Playback reader delivers user data from employees' existing contactless credentials to existing applications and systems, with no need to change or update those systems. The WAVE ID Writer was used to encode employees' existing alphanumeric passwords onto their ID card to avoid the need for re-enrollment.

Highly configurable, the reader allows customers to change the location being read on the contactless card as required. The multi-application reader delivered significant cost savings to the plant because there was no need for pilot tests, training, software updates, technical support, licenses or the hassle of incompatibilities. rf IDEAS readers simply plug and play.

THE RESULTS

Increased productivity and OSHA compliance with little investment

Increased efficiency. Employees now simply wave their door access ID credentials near the rf IDEAS reader mounted next to the computer terminal to quickly and easily gain access to the machinery.

Increased productivity. After several weeks of using the WAVE ID Playback reader, employee productivity increased and calls to the help desk to reset passwords decreased significantly.

OSHA compliance. Since employees are no longer tempted to remove their safety gloves to type in a password, both OSHA requirements and adherence to the safety protocols within the production area have been met.

Minimal cost. Because rf IDEAS products are adaptable to multiple technologies, the new solution only needed to be rolled out to the few employees who required authorization. Those employees are now able to use their existing ID credentials for both door access into the building and access to computer terminals, saving the processing plant thousands of dollars by avoiding the need to switch out their old system to accommodate a few employees.

Employee ID cards and the WAVE ID family of readers can be used in a variety of applications throughout a manufacturing facility. Some example applications include:

• HMI, PAC and PLC interface for automatic identification and authorization
• Single sign-on for computer and program authentication and access
• Secure print management
• Training compliance
• Time and attendance
• Mobile workforce
• Employee authorization to work on specific SKUs
• Industrial tool control
• Cashless cafeteria

For more application information, visit www.rfIDEAS.com

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