



## Case Study

**Products:** LaserChamp Bluetooth Scanner and SerialMagic Professional for Palm OS

**Customer:** Space Science and Engineering Center (SSEC) – University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Application:** Asset Tracking and Inventory Control

### **Business Background:**

The Space Science and Engineering Center (SSEC) is a research and development center in the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Graduate School. Established in 1965, the SSEC primarily focuses on geophysical research and technology to enhance the understanding of the Earth and other planets in the Solar System.

### **Solution Tool:**

By deploying a LaserChamp Tri-Mode Bluetooth Scanner, SerialMagic Professional Software for Palm, Palm TX handheld device, HanDBase Professional Software, LoftwareLabel Management and an Intermec EasyCoder F4 printer, the SSEC is able to track, control and maintain inventory for each piece of equipment on each floor and in every room of the SSEC building.

### **Problem:**

Before the introduction of the current inventory solution, the SSEC relied on another inventory system that consisted of a Symbol SPT-1500 and a Visual Basic add-in from a company called AppForge (now out of business). The main problem for the SSEC with this set up, was having an inventory system based on a company that suddenly went out of business. But there were other problems with this system as well. The SPT-1500, based off of the old Palm III design, had replaceable batteries rather than re-chargeable batteries. Since the SSEC's use of this unit was more sporadic the batteries were always going dead. Every time the batteries went dead they would not only have to replace the batteries but also reload the software, which caused them even more issues. The SSEC also ran into problems with the link-up to their standard databases, MS Access based. They found the connection between the Palm based database and the Access database to be unreliable. Based on all of these problems the SSEC was forced to search for a new inventory solution.

### **Solution:**

Now, every piece of equipment the SSEC needs to track is issued a custom barcode, specific to each item. Each item is then scanned into their Palm TX, using the LaserChamp Tri-mode Bluetooth scanner and SerialMagic Professional, and is given a location. Using HanDBase Professional software, loaded on the Palm, they are able to designate each item to a specific floor, room and person. There is even an area where they can add notes specific to each item if a special case arises. After all the data and notes are collected, the Palm is synced with the desktop. This takes all the gathered data on the Palm and updates the actual inventory database. After completing the update process the entire inventory will be adjusted and any notes will be recorded. All changes and/or missing items will then be noted for the inventory manager to investigate.

### **Benefits:**

- The LaserChamp Bluetooth Scanner pairs beautifully and painlessly with the Palm TX
- SerialMagic Pro makes it a snap to integrate the LaserChamp with any software developed on the Palm
- Saved a great deal of development and maintenance costs
- Easier to support over the long term
- The LaserChamp scanner 'goes to sleep', automatically preserving the batteries

For more information on scanning solutions please contact [www.serialio.com](http://www.serialio.com). (805) 964-8883.

Please contact Dave Allen, [dave.allen@ssec.wisc.edu](mailto:dave.allen@ssec.wisc.edu), for more information on the SSEC and their asset tracking solution.