



Updated WMS and RFID Systems

Alpine Supply Chain Solutions helps Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) modernize their warehouse, store systems, and processes.



Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) is a customer-owned electric utility cooperative that services more than 160,000 customers throughout Maryland, including southern Prince George's County, Charles County, St. Mary's County, and all but the northeast portion of Calvert County.

SMECO's headquarters, primary engineering and operations facility, distribution facility and two supply yards are located in Hughesville, MD. An additional newly built distribution facility and supply yard are located in Leonardtown, MD.

The Challenge ▶

Outdated systems, and limited enterprise asset management

SMECO wanted to extend their current enterprise asset management and supply chain solution (Hitachi ABB Power Grid's Ellipse Enterprise Asset Management (EAM)) with a mobile warehouse and inventory management system that would enable the capture of barcode and RFID information. SMECO sought a solution that could be implemented to work with their current environment (EAM software, IT infrastructure, integration architecture, and business processes).

SMECO expected the new solution to:

- Reduce inventory losses and write-offs
- Generate labor savings through greater work efficiencies especially in picking, receiving, cycle counting, etc.
- Reduce data entry errors
- Reduce the number of times inventory is "touched" by warehouse personnel

SMECO engaged Alpine Supply Chain Solutions to lead the software selection project to find the right WMS and RFID systems that would make their plans a reality. Alpine used their Six Steps to Success software selection methodology to:

- Discover and document SMECO's requirements for both the warehouse operations and the RFID based asset tracking and yard security system
- Craft the necessary RFP and demo script documentation
- Develop a list of suitable vendors
- Coordinate the execution of the process and help SMECO chose their vendor of choice for each solution

This process resulted in the selection of Koerber's Edge solution for the WMS and Meridian's SAM (Strategic Asset Management) RFID/Barcode Asset Tracking Management solution for the RFID based yard/gate asset security system.

"Alpine did a great job leading the selection process for the WMS and the RFID solutions. They helped bring the right vendors to the table, executed a structured, fact-based process, and supported us in making the best decision for our requirements," said Kathy Nutter, Managing Director, Logistics at SMECO.

SMECO then engaged Alpine to assist with the design and implementation planning for the new installation and project oversight. Alpine also executed and managed the client-side responsibilities for the implementation.

The Outcome ▶

"Designing the correct solution architecture to ensure that the new WMS and RFID solutions, each from different vendors, played well with each other, integrated effectively with Ellipse, and delivered the project requirements was our first real challenge. Alpine led this effort and helped us develop the solution architecture to ensure our success,"

-Remarkd Adam Vincent, IT Applications Director at SMECO.

Alpine then led the execution of the client-side responsibilities for SMECO. These responsibilities included:

- **Developing unit test scripts**
- **Assisting in the execution of system acceptance testing**
- **Developing and documenting work instructions and standard operating procedures**
- **Creating end user training by building on vendor supplied materials and tailoring them to the customer SOPs**
- **Conduct Train-the-Trainer sessions**
- **Provide operational and technical go-live support for both management and hourly associates**

"The technical and operational support provided by Alpine throughout the testing, training and implementation phases of this project resulted in a very successful go-live event. The detailed work instructions, procedures and Train-the-Trainer sessions they provided were extremely helpful in our end user training program and go-live experience."

-Stated Mike Campbell, Regional Stores Manager at SMECO