

Top 10 Retailer Reaps Big Benefits from GTS Test & Replace™ and Battery Color-Coding™ - A Case Study

A well-known, Top 10 retailer was experiencing significant problems with its voice and data (barcode scanners and printers) mobile devices in its scores of Distribution Centers and thousands of stores nationwide.

Its voice devices, the Spectralink 84xx series WiFi phones, were an obvious problem because they were regularly failing mid-shift which not only caused staff productivity losses but, worse, hurt the overall customer experience. It also resulted in lost sales.

The retailer also knew that it was losing productivity and paying too much for mobile device service costs on its scanners because of similar mid-shift battery failures. But it could not easily quantify the scope of the problem or figure out a way to solve it other than paying the exorbitant cost of a wholesale refresh of all of its mobile batteries. They simply had no other choice at the time.

GTS then offered its powerful Test & Replace™ technology system as a fast and easy way to identify bad batteries and replace them with new batteries. A pilot program was started in the retailer's distribution centers covering all three models of their mobile devices. At that time, GTS did the testing, replacing and recycling for the sites and it was a fast and unqualified success.

The DC's immediately realized significant reductions in staff downtime from mid-shift device failures and also experienced savings in unnecessary device service costs due to misdiagnoses of device "failures" when it was actually a battery problem. The retailer also discovered that it could buy fewer batteries, overall, by being able to identify and remove only the bad batteries while keeping the good ones and re-apportioning battery inventory only where and when it was needed.

The Test & Replace™ managed service now is used on all of the retailer's voice and data mobile devices in the DC's and stores, including its Spectralink 84XX, Symbol MC9000, Symbol LS4278, and Motorola MT2070 devices. An added bonus is the fact that the retailer now recognizes that the battery testing is so fast and easy that it is having its own teams and consultants do the testing, replacing and recycling onsite.

But the retailer had another mobile device battery problem. Due to the harsh, round-the-clock usage patterns of their mobile devices in the DC's, the retailer often sends their "nearing end of life" batteries to the stores where the use of mobile devices is less intense as a way to extend the useful life of a battery. The difficulty that the retailer had was knowing which batteries were likely to be at that stage of limited usefulness so that they could be transferred from the DC's to the stores at the best time.

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As a custom manufacturer of mobile batteries and chargers, GTS offered an innovative, low-tech solution called Battery Color-Coding™. This program allows a buyer to order a unique color each year instead of the traditional battery color. The key benefit to the retailer is the ability to see how old a “color-generation” of batteries is, and easily get them out of service as a group or downgrade them in its hierarchy of battery users.

For example, in 2017, GTS is making blue batteries in addition to the standard OEM color; in 2018, GTS will make green batteries in addition to the standard color; and so on. This allows the retailer to decide in 2018 that all blue batteries that have not yet reached the natural deterioration point identified by the Test & Replace™ process should be sent to the stores for less stressful use because they are “due” to fail in the months ahead, anyway, and will actually last longer in the less harsh store environment. It is a great way to extract maximum value from an existing mobile battery inventory which is often otherwise just an uncontrolled and mismanaged asset.

With this powerful combination of GTS Test & Replace™ and Battery Color-Coding™ managed services, this Top 10 retailer has an impressive Mobile Power Management System in place and is reaping significant benefits in cutting labor, battery and service costs now and into the future.

However, the story does not end there. Now seeing GTS as its battery and charger experts, the retailer began discussions about our innovative X-Charger™ battery chargers which allow for significant flexibility in the charging inserts being used to allow for different devices and batteries in the same charger. This solution also offers flexibility as new devices are brought into the organization. The retailer can simply replace some or all of the cups to accommodate the new devices alongside any remaining legacy devices and never have to buy a new charger again. It is completely self-contained, configurable and flexible for any future device or battery.

This Top 10 Retailer no longer needs to worry about its mobile batteries or chargers as they have a complete, holistic solution available from GTS which highlights our innovative thought leadership in this industry. As we often tell our clients, “GTS thinks about mobile batteries and chargers 24x7 so you don’t have to.”