

GRA

At a glance

Profile:

GRA is a veteran-owned small business providing specialized products and services to support the warfighter. GRA was founded in 1982 with the vision of conducting engineering and scientific analyses and evaluations related to missile and sensor systems. Over the years, GRA has successfully built on that strong foundation by expanding its areas of expertise from sensors, guidance, and control into special programs, modeling and simulation, training, inventory management, and program support.

Business Challenge:

Need to abandon paper-based inventory management for automated system

Solution:

- Intermec CN3 rugged mobile computer
- Intermec CN70 rugged mobile computer

Results:

- Annual inventory audit shortened from 6 months to complete to approximately seven days
- Reduction in duplicate equipment purchases, lost and stolen equipment and excessive warranty and maintenance costs

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Intermec®



AUDIT AUTOMATION SAVES BIG

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Sharlene Hicks, Vice President, Business Services & Systems, GRA

Gleason Research Associates, Inc. (GRA) is a veteran-owned small business providing specialized products and services to support the warfighter. GRA was founded in 1982 with the vision of conducting engineering and scientific analyses and evaluations related to missile and sensor systems. Over the years, GRA has successfully built on that strong foundation by expanding its areas of expertise from sensors, guidance, and control into special programs, modeling and simulation, training, inventory management, and program support.

In the early 1990s, GRA identified challenges in their manual system of tracking government property. They quickly found that attempting to keep track of Sub and Temporary Hand Receipts manually – and accurately – was nearly impossible. Using a paper and pencil to perform inventories also proved to be a time intensive process that resulted in a high number of errors. For these reasons, GRA looked to automate and reduce the time required to conduct inventories and increase accuracy of property transactions. As a result, GRA's proprietary software, Auto Scan Tracking System (ASTS®) software was born.

Establishing Automation

To accompany their newly established software tracking system, GRA decided to partner with Intermec to provide rugged mobile computers with robust scanning capabilities. GRA deployed the CN3 rugged mobile computer, and just recently added the CN70 rugged mobile computer to their ASTS® software compatible products catalog.

“Intermec was able to provide technically sound hardware and excellent support, something we found to be lacking with other hardware vendors,” said Sharlene Hicks, Vice President, Business Services & Systems at Gleason Research Associates, Inc. “Intermec’s history with DOD also gave us the peace of mind that we could offer our customers a proven solution.”

A Seamless Solution

Under the new system, GRA’s software solution is used to identify exceptions to monthly cyclic and annual physical inventories. After coordinating with designated Hand Receipt Holders, GRA pulls a copy of the inventory and begins the scanning process. Once all items have been scanned, the inventory is then uploaded back to the ASTS® database for reconciliation. The Intermec mobile computer can be used to identify an item either through its barcode or serial number, allowing the user to continue working, even if an item’s barcode has been removed or fallen off.

“The roll out process for the ASTS® software and mobile computers was fairly quick,” said Hicks. “At the time, GRA only had a handful of customers, so there was a buffer as we tested and tweaked the system. In total, the roll out took approximately three months and we haven’t looked back since.”

The ASTS® software is an Army Networkworthiness Certified enterprise solution for the inventory tracking and management of Government property. The ASTS® system is easy-to-learn, easy-to-use and compliant with Army regulations and guidelines. The ASTS® software simplifies and expedites property management at the Hand Receipt Holder level, eliminating the need for paper and spreadsheets. The ASTS® system can standalone or act as an end user interface to the Army’s PBUSE and DPAS web systems. The ASTS® software is designed as a “cradle to grave” tracking system, allowing the user to see the full inventory history of any end-item, its origin into the program, its usage, its location, and ultimately its disposal.

The integrated Intermec mobile computers enable the user to conduct inventories quickly, efficiently, and accurately, reducing the chance of counting errors and inaccurate reporting. The ASTS® software incorporates multiple functions that automate the logistics and supply processes. Hand Receipt management and shipping/receiving processes and transactions are simplified within the ASTS® software by automatically generating the required Government forms. Documents can be uploaded to one, or multiple end items, detailing the item’s history including locations, shipments, usage, maintenance, etc. Additionally, a picture can be uploaded to any individual item or part. A prominent feature within the ASTS® software is the ability to generate Hand Receipts and Sub-Hand Receipts, bringing greater clarity, oversight, and accountability for items within an individual’s scope of responsibility.

“This solution has afforded our customers the satisfaction of never failing an IG inspection or audit, as well as to prevent losses in inventoried items and duplicate purchases,” said Hicks.

GRA

Keys to Success

“With the new solution, GRA has identified that an annual inventory that used to take 6 months to complete, can now be completed in approximately seven days,” said Hicks. “Also, the ASTS® system has proven to reduce duplicate equipment purchases, lost and stolen equipment and excessive warranty and maintenance costs.”

Hicks said GRA is currently in process of developing a phone app, as well as expanding UID features and capabilities.

“The key to success for GRA/ASTS® software has been to give the user what they want, not what you think they need,” said Hicks. “GRA has developed our ASTS® solution by taking input from users, asking them what they need; building this total solution from the bottom up and it has proven to be very successful.”



CN3 and CN70 Rugged Mobile Computers

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