



GULF COAST LOGISTICS COMPANY SHIFTS INTO HIGH GEAR WITH DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

MOTOTRBO™ DRIVES SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY FROM DOCK TO DOOR



The Kearney Companies, Inc. (KCO) is one of the largest third party logistics (3PL) providers on the Gulf Coast. Operating from the Port of New Orleans on the Mississippi River, the family-owned company has a rich history of warehousing and 3PL services that spans four generations.

Today, KCO oversees more than 700,000 square feet of rail-served warehouse capacity and over 45 acres of yard capacity in the New Orleans region. From rolled paper to steel products to cotton for export, KCO transports, warehouses and distributes millions of tons of international cargo.

“Every day we move cargo from the Port of New Orleans to eight different facilities,” says David Kearney, President. “As our truck drivers (draymen) transport containers, we need constant communication between our dispatch office, drivers and warehouse locations for large-scale efficiency.”

With the growth in export and import container business through the Port of New Orleans and an increase in drivers that travel outside New Orleans, KCO knew it had to expand radio communications to improve efficiency and customer service. The company quickly embraced the operations-critical benefits of Motorola’s digital technology with MOTOTRBO radios and MOTOTRBO Connect Plus commercial network.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Company

- The Kearney Companies, Inc.
- New Orleans, Louisiana

Motorola Solution

- MOTOTRBO XPR™ 7550 Portable Radios
- MOTOTRBO XPR 5550 Mobile Radio/Base Station
- IMPRES™ Noise-Canceling Speaker Microphones
- MOTOTRBO Connect Plus Commercial System

Features

- Instant, always available communications
- Clear communication in noisy environments
- Continuous coverage across a region
- Increased efficiency of daily operations
- Flexible financing and radio trade-ins

CASE STUDY

THE KEARNEY COMPANIES, INC.

THE CHALLENGE

Overcome the Limitations of Analog

Real-time communication is imperative to efficiency and safety in the fast-paced 3PL business. Two-way radios unify diverse teams of employees and are the vehicle for a steady flow of information – from driver to driver, driver to dispatch, driver to warehouse, warehouse to customer service, and back.

As KCO grew, it outgrew analog radio technology. The FCC mandate on narrowbanding in January 2013 had reduced the range of the analog citywide commercial network and degraded the quality of the audio. “We were definitely having problems with background noise, static, and hearing two different conversations at the same time,” says David Kearney. “The sound of trucks is very loud and docks have forklift noise, beeping and more. All that is very disruptive when you are in a quiet office trying to communicate with your personnel.”

Eliminate Cell Phone Workarounds

“We discovered our people stopped using their analog radios because of these issues,” Kearney explains.

“They started using their personal cell phones or text

messaging, both of which are unsafe while driving. They were working around the communication platform we put in place. Aside from the safety issues with cell phones, this was blurring the line between business and personal use.”

Expand Communications as the Company Grows

KCO was also expanding its distribution reach beyond New Orleans to Slidell and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For years the company rented monthly airtime on the citywide commercial system operated by Tomba Communications, the local Motorola channel partner.

Like many analog systems, the network was being phased out as more businesses embraced the advantages of digital. “We had to scale up from 20 radios to at least 40 initially as we took on more local trucking operations and hired more supervision,” says Kearney. “Motorola’s digital platform certainly makes it a lot easier to add radios and keep all our logistics operations connected. As our business became more regional, we saw the importance of everyone being able to communicate clearly together.”

“The switchover from the analog citywide to MOTOTRBO digital citywide commercial network was painless.”

**David Kearney,
President, The Kearney
Companies, Inc.**



“One of the best features of MOTOTRBO digital radios is the clarity of speech without annoying background noise. Their durability and battery life has far exceeded our expectations.”

William Montelius, General Manager, The Kearney Companies, Inc.

THE SOLUTION

MOTOTRBO Digital: The Right Call for the Regional Haul

Wendi Weileman, Account Executive at Tomba Communications, sat down with KCO President, David Kearney, to discuss the transition to MOTOTRBO Connect Plus, the digital commercial system. This 5-site, state-of-the-art, wide area network connects personnel instantly throughout Southeast Louisiana.

The only challenge for KCO was they would have to replace their aging analog radios. After testing MOTOTRBO digital radios for several days on site, they were impressed with the capabilities of TDMA digital technology. "KCO loved the digital radios," Weileman recalls. "They were crystal clear and did not have any static."

David Kearney concurs, "We've been a partner with Motorola and Tomba for 20 years with radios, but the switch to digital really made it more scalable and made our communications much more clear and easy to understand in very loud environments."

MOTOTRBO Commercial System Goes the Extra Mile

The reach of KCO's operations meant they needed to communicate not only in warehouses, but across southeastern Louisiana. By using radios on a commercial system with affordable monthly airtime, they benefit from the extensive, clear coverage of the MOTOTRBO Connect Plus digital network without the cost of radio licenses, towers and infrastructure.

"The citywide commercial digital system here is very good. We don't have any issues in terms of dead spots, coverage drops and other problems," says David

Kearney. "I'm convinced that with all the hurricanes we face in Louisiana, the MOTOTRBO digital network is very redundant and able to recover more rapidly than the old analog one."

Switch to Digital Without a Hitch

The transition from analog to digital was seamless according to David Kearney. "Tomba Communications did a great job rolling it over in a day. The process was painless; there was no downtime whatsoever." Tomba kept KCO on the analog system until the new digital radios were programmed. "Our technicians brought in the MOTOTRBO XPR 7550 portable radios, all charged up and ready to go. They installed the MOTOTRBO XPR 5550 base station for dispatch and swapped out the analog radios overnight, so KCO had continuous communications," says Wendi Weileman.

Trade-Ins and Flexible Financing Carry Weight

Two factors played a role in helping KCO make the decision to upgrade to MOTOTRBO digital radios. The first was Motorola's promotion to trade in analog radios and receive a generous credit toward the purchase of MOTOTRBO digital radios.

"We were scaling up from 20 radios to 40 and it made no sense to do that on an analog system that was going to be sunsetted. With the discount and financing package, it was a no brainer," says Kearney. "By encouraging us to get on digital and making it financially achievable, it was an easy, clean decision."

Second, a flexible financing package made it very seamless. KCO financed their radio purchase with Lease Corporation of America, a Motorola vendor.

"We were able to buy the radios through a financing arrangement that was very simple and very clean. That along with the trade-in discount made my decision easy."

**David Kearney,
President, The Kearney
Companies, Inc.**

"Motorola is the gold standard for radios. The product quality sells itself. We knew that and it was packaged to make it all work for us."

**David Kearney, President,
The Kearney Companies, Inc.**





“MOTOTRBO digital radios are the operations-critical tools for all our communication needs.”

**William Montelius,
General Manager, The
Kearney Companies, Inc.**

THE BENEFITS

Greater Mobility, Agility and Collaboration

From the dock to distribution point, MOTOTRBO digital radios are connecting KCO personnel with real-time communications so they can collaborate more efficiently. As workers move, communication moves with them, so they can be responsive over a wider area. For Kearney Companies and their managers, this means crews are more agile and no longer building-based or operations-specific.

“Our ability to talk with managers, customer service, dispatch, truck drivers and warehouse supervisors at the same time has eliminated a lot of our communication problems,” says William Montelius, General Manager of Logistics. “MOTOTRBO radios help everyone know what’s going on throughout our company. Now we have the best communication between all our key people throughout the day at any given moment.”

Excellent Clarity and Increased Safety

As a long-time advocate of radios, KCO knows how crucial they are to safe operations – from draymen hauling loads to supervisors in the warehouse terminals. Unlike cell phones, two-way radios are not restricted by the U.S. Department of Transportation for commercial motor vehicles.

“One touch of the radio is very safe compared to a cell phone and the temptations of texting. With the excellent clarity of digital communications, our personnel are using the radios and avoiding cell phones, which for truck drivers is absolutely imperative,” says Kearney.

“The audio – both the clarity and noise-canceling aspect of digital – is substantially better. The quality of the sound is great and the message is clear,” adds Kearney. “Because they are using the radios and not reverting to cell phones, they are communicating safely.”

Easy Scalability Today, and Down the Road

For one of the leading 3PL providers on the Gulf Coast and its fourth generation owner, being able to adapt to the times is in its DNA. The world is turning digital acknowledges David Kearney, and when companies leapfrog into that technology, they will see strong operational gains, cost-savings and return on investment. “The decision to go digital with Motorola was a no brainer,” he says. “We’re getting better technology with MOTOTRBO and a more scalable platform for the future. It’s been a simple, clean move and I would encourage everyone to do it.”

To shift your business into high gear, visit motorolasolutions.com/transportation or contact your local Motorola representative.

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