

**The system from WhereNet enables the logistics company to track containers, trailers and tractors within its 70-acre yard.<br>**

By Jennifer Maselli

Sept. 8, 2003 - [NYK Logistics](#) is more than 100 years old, and its longevity may be attributed in part to the company's willingness to embrace new technology. The Secaucus, N.J., logistics provider has implemented a real-time locating system (RTLS) at its Long Beach, Calif., facility that uses battery-powered RFID tags to track every container, trailer and tractor within its 70-acre yard.

NYK manages a high volume of products, including garments and accessories, consumer and industrial goods, computer software, food and beverages, and electronics. The Long Beach facility's main customer is Target, a \$44 billion retail chain based in Minneapolis, Minn.



*NYK's Pople*

Last year, NYK decided it needed to make its yard-management system less dependent on manual labor. The existing system relied on individuals to enter data into a PC. For instance, people had to enter information about a truck arriving at the yard, what it was carrying and where it would drop its load.

NYK chose to deploy an active RFID system from [WhereNet](#), an RTLS systems provider based in Santa Clara, Calif. Thirty-five WhereNet readers were installed around the perimeter of the yard. They monitor 1,100 parking spaces and 250 dock doors. When a container arrives it's tagged with a WhereNet transmitter. The tags broadcast a signal at regular intervals. The readers pick up the signal, transmit the data wirelessly to a host system, and software calculates the location of the asset to within 10 feet.

All this happens in real time, which is critical, according to Rick Pople, NYK's general manager, because the yard operates around the clock, and NYK has three partners that bring in containers from 11 different steam ship lines and as many as 15 different domestic carriers. "We couldn't have enough people with clipboards and bicycles to monitor all that," he says.

By integrating the WhereNet system with NYK's Transload system—a custom database that contains a list of advanced shipment notices, the contents of the shipment as well as distributor information—NYK is able to feed advanced shipment notices to the WhereNet system. Once a container is tagged, the WhereNet system can query Transload to find out what's in the container and then direct workers scanning the containers to move the container to the appropriate area.

"Not only do we know the name and identity of the unit, we also know its DNA," says Pople. "We can

see the yard and the containers."