CouriersPlease reduces parcel cage losses with Optus and Thinxtra-powered IoT roll cage tracking

The Challenge

A leading parcel delivery service, CouriersPlease (CP) needed a solution to improve asset management of 3,500 parcel cages to reduce loss and optimize distribution of over 30 million parcels per year, while the business experienced annual growth of 80 percent.

The Solution

CouriersPlease deployed an IoT-enabled, flexible asset track and trace solution from Optus and Thinxtra to get real-time visibility into the location of each individual parcel cages.

The Results

The asset tracking solution lets CouriersPlease:
- scale efficiently
- use location data insights to reduce instances of lost, stolen and underutilized parcel cages
- optimize operations amid significant business growth.

0G Network Operator

thinxtra

Thinxtra, The IoT Telco, owns and operates the Sigfox 0G Network in Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong, is the exclusive distributor of Soracom cellular IoT services in the region and is a 0G United Nations member (the global association of 0G Network Operators). Visit the Thinxtra website for more information.

Solution Partner

OPTUS

As one of the largest telecommunications companies in Australia, Optus provides mobile, telephony, internet, satellite, entertainment, and business network services to more than 10 million customers daily. Visit the Optus website for more information.

Customer

CouriersPlease®

As Australia's leading franchised parcel delivery service, CouriersPlease manages over 30 million parcels annually. A subsidiary of Singapore Post, its 160-year history with innovative mail and logistics solutions lets it provide a truly rewarding customer experience. For more details, visit the CouriersPlease website.

CouriersPlease is a parcel delivery service and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Singapore Post (SingPost). The company delivers parcels across Australia through a network of 750 franchises and 350 delivery partners. Over the last two years, CP experienced an 80 percent increase in business because of nationwide COVID-19 lockdowns. The company now moves more than 30 million parcels every year, using around 3,500 parcel cages to manage its freight.

Phil Reid, Chief Operating Officer at CouriersPlease, says, "With rising demand for our services, we found our transport parcel cages, which carry between 60 to 600 packages each, were increasingly disappearing. Common reasons for losses are theft, or cages left in our commercial customers' facilities, unidentified for return. We've lost hundreds of these cages over the years."

While losing parcel cages is not a new challenge, the cost of solving the problem in the past had always outweighed the cost of the asset losses. With each parcel cage costing approximately AUD$1,000 each, CP expected the losses to rapidly become unsustainable as its business expanded. Missing cages represented a high ongoing cost to the business and created supply chain inefficiencies.

Fixing the lost parcel cage problem and maintaining high service standards for franchisees and customers became a pressing business challenge to solve.
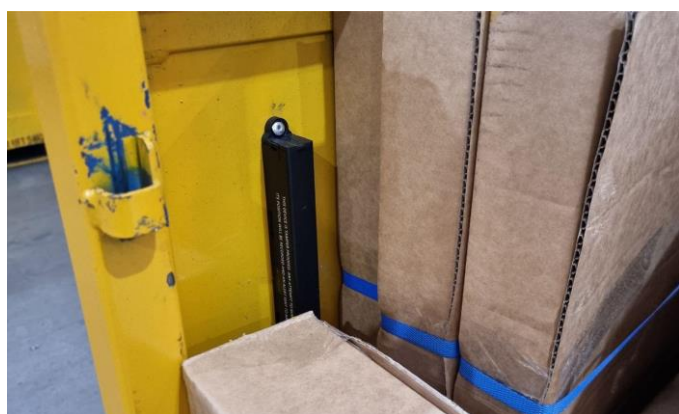
Parcel Cage with IoT Tracking Device connected to Thinxtra's 0G Network

A new solution to an old problem

The CP team approached Optus for advice on how to reduce its asset losses.

Zorawar Singh, Head of Core Product at Optus Enterprises, says, "At a high level, the solution seemed to be a form of asset tracking. A typical challenge with tracking systems is to make sure the solution is cost-effective and relevant to the tracked asset and the data needed from the asset. There is a wide range of tracking devices and prices. Yet paying $500 for a tracking device on an asset valued at $1,000 doesn't make sense. The asset's tracking requirements don't justify the cost."

Optus Enterprise partnered with Thinxtra, operator of the Sigfox 0G network, to provide the right IoT-enabled tracking solution at a viable total cost of ownership. The 0G Network transmits small amounts of information from connected IoT devices across vast distances.

The Thinxtra 0G Network provides CP with nationwide, low-cost, low-energy device connectivity. These features make it an ideal network for transmitting the small bytes of data CP needed to identify the location of each parcel cage. Additionally, every pre-configured Thinxtra device has a battery life of more than five years, removing the need for ongoing maintenance and associated costs for the device's lifetime.

Reid says, "We looked at various vendors, including 4G options. We partnered with Optus and Thinxtra because they offered collaborative asset tracking backed by battery-powered LPWAN-based IoT sensors that we don't need to mess with or replace for years, making it an extremely cost-effective value proposition."

CP expects all units will be connected and send location information from the parcel cages to a centralized dashboard where CP can see the location of each cage in real-time.

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If we didn't have this partnership with Thinxtra, our team could not have solved CourierPlease's problem cost-effectively. The alternatives were more expensive, less flexible, scalable, user-friendly, and more difficult to implement. We believe Thinxtra's powerful, national 0G Network is the best connectivity solution and offers the greatest value for the customer. There is simply no need for customers to build and maintain network infrastructure because Thinxtra has it ready to go.

Zorawar Singh, Head of Product, Optus Enterprise

> " *We expect to lose zero parcel cages. We're looking at the difference between losing hundreds of cages over recent years to losing zero in a matter of months. The savings from reduced asset losses easily outweighs the cost of implementing Thinxtra's solution. The tracking solution also optimises our processes because we have a proactive approach to cage retrieval and targeted deployment. As we scale up, we'll add more cages and get more use out of them because they won't be stolen, lost or unused.*

Phil Reid, COO, CouriersPlease

From hundreds of parcel cage losses to zero in a matter of month

While any IoT implementation is different for every company, Reid is eager to dispel the notion that it's unnecessary or too expensive.

He says, "People forget how quickly technology improves and prices drop. IoT tech is getting better and better and more cost-effective. We're only scraping the surface of its future potential. To be the only 0G IoT Telco in Australia tells you something important about Thinxtra's culture. They're looking way ahead over the horizon, and that's exactly the kind of company you want to be working with."

In the future, CP will extend its Optus tracking solution to other parts of its business. Reid notes, "We're keen to get to the point where we can track individual, high-value parcels and know where they are at any time."

Nicholas Lambrou, CEO, Thinxtra,, Phil Reid,, COO, CouriersPlease, Taba Managheb,Enterprise Sales,.Optus

> " *By digitalizing its services with efficient, low-power IoT sensors connected to the Thinxtra 0G Network, CouriersPlease has bolstered its business to support the growing number of Australians shopping online and removing the risks of asset management. With our Optus partnership, we're enabling real-time visibility for CouriersPlease's national network. The solution ensures its high-value cages aren't left unseen, lost, or stolen after transit by franchises and delivery partners.*

Nicholas Lambrou, CEO, Thinxtra