Netherlands Opens Doors to UID
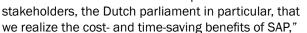
New UID Policy Launched with Camcode Global as Partner

When the Netherlands Ministry of Defence (MoD) committed to a $235 million implementation of a new SAP enterprise resource system in 2003, the pressure was on to take maximum advantage of the system's efficiency-boosting benefits. Bearing the responsibility for successful SAP implementation was the 6,000-employee Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO), which manages such assets as small arms, controlled cryptographic items and medical equipment for the Netherlands' air force, army, navy and military police.

"All of our contacts with Camcode Global were essential in understanding UID. We were quickly able to make the right decisions to lay down a failure-free UID foundation."

"There was a high expectation from all stakeholders, the Dutch parliament in particular, that we realize the cost- and time-saving benefits of SAP," says Rune Koesen, Project/System Manager for the DMO and a key part of the ministry's SAP implementation.

But Koesen and his team faced a difficult challenge -- to devise an item unique identification (UID) policy for the Netherlands that would allow the MoD to take optimal advantage of SAP's automated identification technology and comply with NATO's relatively new standard for UID, STANAG 2290. At that time, the United States was the only other NATO country to have embraced UID with its standard MIL-STD-130, first introduced in 2005.

"My personal understanding of UID at the time was practically zero," Koesen recalls. "I read the STANAG 2290 and MIL-STD-130 at that time, and could grasp only the essentials."

As he began his UID research, a simple Internet search turned up Camcode Global, which made an immediate positive impression on Koesen for its easy-to-understand website, valuable links and free UID samples. But once his relationship with Camcode Global began, Koesen realized he was getting so much more.

"Camcode Global proved to be a fast and flexible partner when it came to the actual design, choice of material and the best way to attach the labels to our assets."
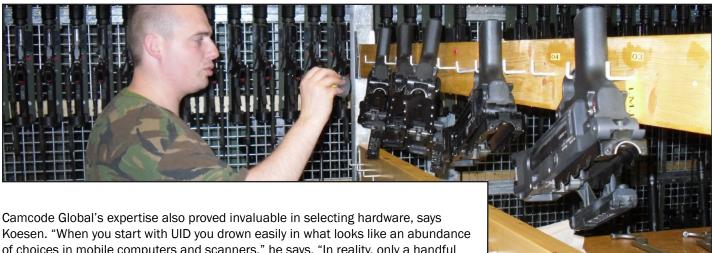

"All of our contacts with Camcode Global were essential in understanding UID, from label options and technology issues to scanner programming and implementation know-how," says Koesen. "We were quickly able to make the right decisions to lay down a failure-free UID foundation."

Critical to that foundation was ensuring the right label choice for the MoD's needs. Label quality was Koesen's top priority, so he took Camcode Global's labels to the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO), which provides independent product quality testing and verification. "The tests TNO performed confirmed that Camcode Global's UID labels are in every way as advertised," he says.

Camcode Global's expertise also proved invaluable in selecting hardware, says Koesen. "When you start with UID you drown easily in what looks like an abundance of choices in mobile computers and scanners," he says. "In reality, only a handful are suited for the job, and Camcode Global's expertise proved essential in picking the right one and having it programmed correctly for UID."

Camcode Global's experts also acted as consultants in the development of the MoD's UID policy, and were able to facilitate introductions between Koesen and U.S. UID experts, particularly with Rob Leibrandt of the U.S. DoD UID Policy Office, also the Chairman, NATO UID Working group (AC 327/WG5).

"This introduction helped enormously," says Koesen. "We could check with him easily without going through long bureaucratic lines to see if we were on the right track in implementing STANAG 2290."

With the combined expertise of Camcode Global and U.S. UID experts, Koesen successfully drafted a comprehensive UID implementation plan for The Netherlands, which took effect in 2009. He completed a successful pilot program labeling 320 assets using Camcode Global's Metalphoto® flexible labels with adhesive attachment, and will launch full-scale implementation of UID labeling of 215,000 assets in October 2010.

"Camcode Global proved to be a fast and flexible partner when it came to the actual design, choice of material and the best way to attach the labels to our assets," says Koesen.

After this first 215,000-asset labeling process, Koesen will initiate ongoing labeling of the MoD's remaining legacy and new assets, numbering approximately two million by completion. With the Netherlands becoming only the second NATO country to implement UID, Koesen now recommends Camcode Global to his counterparts throughout the alliance as a partner in their UID implementation.

"Whenever we can, we recommend Camcode Global to our NATO colleagues as a solid, reliable and understanding business partner."

"Whenever we can, we recommend Camcode Global to our NATO colleagues as a solid, reliable and understanding business partner," says Koesen.