



# Sortation

## Case Study

### Parceline Major Sorting Hub—Birmingham

#### Background

Parceline, part of a European group owned by GeoPost, which also includes Interlink Express handles 2500 parcels each night. More than half of those pass through the four sorter lines at its Birmingham super hub. Parceline needed to upgrade the capacity of the four sorting lines of its Birmingham super hub to meet increased demand for next day deliveries.

#### Challenge

The four existing sorter lines were 20 years old and already running at their maximum capacity. Increasing levels of business together with more customers demanding next day deliveries, meant that a decision was needed on whether to replace, to add or upgrade the four sorting lines.

In addition, the old approach to control cabling was to individually wire all components back to the panel. ASE adopted a modern approach with the implementation of the AS-i field bus. This low cost technology saved on time and simplified installation.

#### Solution

It was decided to upgrade the lines with inverter driven motors, the whole project needed to be completed within an 8-week period, without disruption to normal operations.

Following the completion of a successful project in Manchester, Parceline has awarded Automation Software Engineering a contract for the refurbishment of its major sorting hub in Birmingham. The contract, with a value approaching £250,000, was for the replacement of the 164 parcel diverter motors by the latest models which have built-in inverter control. The motors were networked using AS-ibus and FIPIO instead of the discrete digital input/outputs used previously. ASE were also responsible for producing the application software.

ASE's Managing Director, Tony Bowen, said: " We are delighted that Parceline has expressed its confidence in our capabilities and look forward to developing our business relationship."

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#### Benefits

- Large reduction in line stoppages
- Less parcels being damaged
- Faster and efficient operation
- Average time of parcel through hub - 90 seconds

#### Project Statistics

- 164 motors
- 41 diverters
- 140 000 parcels per night
- 5 000 parcels per line per hour capacity

#### Systems Expertise

- Inverter set-up
- AS-ibus configuration
- High speed SCADA alarm information