Landscape
With 80 years of experience in retail and wholesale agricultural products, Eldon C. Stutsman is one of Iowa’s larger suppliers of agricultural products. Nearly 170 employees work in three buildings on the company’s main campus. With many hourly employees, it’s critical to keep track of employee time and attendance to ensure profitability in every facility.

Challenges
To keep track of time and attendance, Stutsman used a traditional punch clock in all of its buildings. It became evident, however, the company was experiencing issues with “buddy punching,” a practice in which an employee punches in for someone else on the time clock. In addition to providing false information about employee attendance and work hours, this practice negatively impacts payroll as employers compensate for work time they did not receive.

Desired outcome
Stutsman partnered with Longley Systems to find a time and attendance solution that would prevent buddy punching and provide an accurate report of employee time.

Solutions
Stutsman adopted a biometric HandReader to improve how they tracked time and attendance. The first solution—used for approximately 12 years—was the HandPunch® 3000 from Schlage®. When those were ready to be replaced, Stutsman upgraded its readers to Schlage’s newest HandReader: the HandPunch® GT-400.
HandPunch 3000

Longley Systems recommended the HandPunch 3000. This biometric reader with integrated time clock verifies an employee’s identity in less than one second by comparing the unique size and shape of their hand to a hand template on file in the reader. Because every employee’s hand geometry is different, it’s virtually impossible for one employee to clock in or out for another.

“No one can punch in or out for another employee,” says Doug Yoder, IT manager at Stutsman. “By moving to a biometric reader, we eliminated false reports, reduced time theft and improved our payroll accuracy.”

Additionally, a biometric reader is much simpler than a card reader because there are no cards to create, administer, carry or lose—another advantage in more industrial environments.

Stutsman utilized the HandPunch 3000 readers for more than a dozen years. When it was time to replace them, Yoder says the company tested a fingerprint biometric reader to see if there were additional efficiencies that could be achieved. It became evident, though, that the fingerprint reader could not provide the same level of performance as a HandReader.

“We realized that not only was the HandPunch 3000 extremely durable to last for so long,” Yoder says, “it was just ideal for an environment like ours. In an agricultural environment, we need a solution that works effectively even when a user’s hand or the device are dirty or damp.”

The company decided to continue using HandReaders for time and attendance—but decided to upgrade since the technology had advanced since first implemented in their facilities.

HandPunch GT-400

In 2013, Stutsman replaced all the HandPunch 3000 readers with Schlage’s newest HandReader: the HandPunch GT-400.

“It works well, just like the HandPunch 3000 did, but it also offers some new features,” says Yoder.

One of the most advantageous features for Stutsman was the GT-400’s push technology. When an employee uses the GT-400 to clock in or out, the reader automatically “pushes” the employee’s punch data from the time clock reader to the cloud-based payroll server in real time.

Previously, Yoder says, the payroll software collected the punches from the individual clocks and loaded them into the database in batches throughout the day. But because it wasn’t automatic, it didn’t always give a true real-time account. “With the GT-400, as soon as the individual is verified, the punch data is automatically pushed into the payroll software when it occurs, without any person or workstation needing to go out and collect it,” Yoder says. “It eliminates steps as well as the touchpoints where errors or failure could occur.” On the GT-400, employees can also perform job transfers, input leave time, and view timesheets, work schedules and accrual balances—all at the clock.

Yoder says the company also found the GT-400’s auto enrollment a tremendous improvement. “We can add an employee to any time clock remotely—making it easier on everyone.”
Result
Yoder reports that implementation of the GT-400 has also decreased administrative efforts because it seamlessly integrates with NOVAtime, the workforce management software Stutsman utilizes. In addition to improving the company’s record-keeping and payroll accuracy, the GT-400 has helped Stutsman mitigate risks by ensuring the company and employees are compliant and productive, mirroring industry statistics. Most clients recognize payback on their initial investment of biometric readers like the HandPunch GT-400, in as little as nine months.