Warehouse Management At The Speed Of Sound

Client

ODW Logistics is an asset-based 3rd Party Logistics and transportation provider with locations in Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin and California. Providing distribution, fulfillment, import logistics and automotive support services, 700 dedicated employees exceed the expectations of customers in locally-owned and managed companies to international Fortune 500 organizations. ODW Logistics serves the unique needs of diverse industries including apparel, electronics, food, medical devices and retail.

Square Footage

In excess of three million.

Products

• Codeworks Warehouse and Distribution Logistics System (WDLS)
• Inther/TopVox voice interface
• EDI interfaces to existing systems
• T. L. Ashford labelling software
• TMW Systems
• Symphony

Overview

Combining personalized service and a strategic view of technology keeps ODW Logistics in a leadership position. This innovative 3PL continually looks for new ways to increase productivity, drive down costs and provide better value for their customers. Their strategic view in warehouse management system selection provides the necessary foundation.

The Challenge

As ODW was reviewing their strategy for supporting business growth, a number of associated goals were considered as well. Could warehouse staff ergonomics, awareness and safety be increased while also increasing productivity and accuracy? How could the latest hands-free, eyes-free processes and technology be implemented while still providing a quick learning curve? And if less paperwork meant less clutter and more efficiency, then was a paperless operation the ultimate solution?

Both RF and voice solutions were considered, but the challenges faced by ODW were more conducive to a voice solution. Requirements for a voice-based solution included real-time updates, throughput that supported ODW's substantial order volume and "integration without middleware."

The Solution

When the research was concluded, Inther, a Netherlands-based company, was selected as the voice supplier of choice.

"One of our voice solution requirements was 'integration without middleware.' The Codeworks WMS gave us more flexibility in selecting a vendor, since its standard features include support for voice technology."

Jon Petticrew,
Vice President of Operations

Codeworks was pleased to be involved in the first U.S.-based installation with ODW, and no middleware was required. Why? Integration capabilities for voice system are included in the standard features of the Codeworks WMS solution.

Codeworks has been a long-term partner of ODW, providing the full-featured and fully-integrated Warehouse and Distribution Logistics System called "WDLS." And being a "one-stop shop" for products and services ranging from business consulting to software, installation, training and support has proven to be a winning combination.

Codeworks began by providing analysis and consulting services that helped ODW select a voice vendor. Next, a transactional-level interface was deemed optimal, allowing for centralized control and visibility of all warehouse operations, whether or not they were voice-enabled. A Codeworks-designed "traffic cop" directed the transactions and response to and from the voice system.

The interface leveraged the warehouse management system capabilities of intelligently assigning picks, directing replenishments and integrating cycle counting of locations. The interface also automatically posted detailed transaction data for data mining. Operational tendencies and performance data became readily available for supervisor access and KPI reporting. The tight integration and ongoing support ensured an on-time, on-budget project delivery in about three months time.

One strength of the solution is how easily it replicates to additional operations. Once the voice equipment is available, updating a few simple account settings in the WMS are all that is needed to use voice on another account or in another facility. In fact, you can intermix voice, RF, and paper picking within an account. All this is managed by the operations team with no additional WMS implementation costs.

Dependable products and support services from Codeworks provide rock-solid operations with the flexibility to expand to meet future needs.

The Results

In providing a one-of-a-kind solution, Codeworks, ODW and Inther were able to reduce order cycle times, significantly reduce training time and help ODW become more cost-effective.

Overall productivity increased by 28% with some functions experiencing improvements in productivity of up to 50%. The voice technology provided by Inther and an exceptional warehouse management system from Codeworks prove that actions still speak louder than words.

"With the help of Codeworks' systems and staff helping to implement these changes, we gained an additional 20% improvement in productivity."

Larry Landtiser,
General Manager,
Strategic Customer Operations

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