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Produce Pro Plus Warehouse Management System Case Study: Primo Number One in Produce Inc.

Project profile

- Implement the Produce Pro WMS with mobile barcode scanning and voice directed picking and loading.
- Improve order accuracy and increase productivity through automated work assignments.
- Workers utilize mobile equipment to access real time inventory, order information, and direct their work functions.

Results

With the Produce Pro WMS, warehouse supervisors have more visibility into what their staff is doing and the remaining workload. They know who is doing what task at any given time and when they finished their last one. Supervisors and users also have greater visibility into where product is in the staging and loading areas. They know where the finished pallets are, what is on each pallet, what has been loaded on a specific trip and what has yet to be loaded, checked or picked. Manual data entry by operations staff and clerks is greatly reduced or eliminated. Supervisors spend less time finding information and more time using that information to manage work flow and streamline operations.

Primo Produce can now also allow less experienced employees to perform new tasks without concern of mistakes or items being left off the truck.

“Our turnover has dropped to almost zero. The ease of training new associates and the improved ratios have had a very positive, upward impact on selector satisfaction and overall warehouse operations.” – Dennis Michael, Director of Operations

- Mis-picks and product shorts reduced 63%
- Selector productivity increased 35%
- 64% reduction in inventory control labor hours



Challenges

Primo Produce indicated a strong interest in improving operational efficiency and inventory accuracy in their warehouse operations. Automation was key in allowing them to handle more business within the existing facility and transform their paper-based business processing.

Before Primo Produce implemented Produce Pro’s Warehouse Management System (WMS), management was faced with a number of concerns while overseeing paper reports:

- Prior to shipping, Primo Produce had to enter the lot moves into the computer by hand.
- Relatively high risk of human error and not enough visibility of lot assignments.
- Overages, shortages and mis-picks were too frequent.
- Timing was a big issue as operations were being held up from going on to the next step waiting for data entry.

Primo Produce’s management wanted to implement an automated system that would allow for improved order accuracy and increased productivity. They also wanted to utilize mobile technology with real-time data so they could reduce operating costs and generate higher profitability.

Solution

In 2009, Primo Produce implemented the Produce Pro WMS, utilizing two sets of mobile technology.

Barcode scanning and Motorola mobile handheld computers for automating inbound operations and product movement. Barcodes were added to the pallet labels and case quantities on each pallet were tracked throughout their time in the warehouse. Mobile scanning devices are now used for the receiving, movement, replenishment and repacking operations. Users no longer have to key in data from receiving documents as this data is captured on the mobile devices. They have full visibility to product location in the warehouse and to available storage locations.

Selection and loading are done via voice directed terminals from Vocollect. Voice was key technology decision for Primo Produce. They recognized the benefits of voice directed system to provide additional efficiencies for their selection operations. Case picking with voice allows their users to work hands free without having to scan the pallet labels. Order accuracy has improved significantly using voice directed work.

- Real time inventory and lot capture
- Increased picking accuracy and picker productivity
- Reduction in data entry and higher automation for dispatch
- Reduce the amount of printed paperwork
- Reduce email and phone traffic by handling information digitally
- Increased inventory accuracy results in reduced inventory adjustments
- Increased worker visibility and accountability
- Increased customer satisfaction due to increased order accuracy



Customer profile

- Primo Produce, located in Allentown, PA, has grown into a multi-million dollar company bringing more than 700 different items from the world's finest markets.
- Primo Produce implemented Produce Pro Software in November 2001.
- The company operates from a 30,000 square foot facility.

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