

Success stories.



Warehouse Management System - Supreme Imports

Before Supreme Imports implemented an automated warehouse management system, they experienced daily picking errors and found inventory checks to be only 60-70% accurate. There was no system in place to monitor receiving or shipping of goods, and stock locations were stored purely in the memories of the warehouse staff.

The issue came to a head when Supreme found up to 40 picking errors per day, most of which related to customer complaints about the wrong product or quantity being delivered. Also due to the lack of a warehouse management system, Supreme were unable to stock the warehouse to full capacity, which limited the range of products they could supply in a highly competitive market.

The Barcode-IT WMS project went live at the beginning of November 2005 and since then traceability in the warehouse has improved from 68% to 92% and stock takes are now 99.5% accurate. More importantly for Supreme and its customers, zero picking errors have been recorded.

"The system has completely revolutionised our warehouse. We are now able to stock many different product lines and the warehouse is always stocked to full capacity." - Tony Leach, Operations Director at Supreme Imports "The WMS installed by Barcode-IT has enabled us to become more competitive in the marketplace and without it we might not be here today."

Supreme are now considering implementing the WMS system in their Cash and Carry store in the centre of Manchester. They are also beginning to trade through direct internet sales, which will be directly linked to the Barcode-IT WMS, to make the shipping process more efficient.

Application Overview

The main benefit of the Supreme WMS is the elimination of human input and therefore human error. The warehouse management system effectively runs the whole warehouse, from receiving goods, through picking, checking and finally shipping. The whole system is automated using the Falcon 4420 portable terminals linked to the main system via RF and Cisco wireless access points to allow operators complete freedom to work anywhere in the warehouse.

Another important element of the WMS is its ability to control stock levels and replenish stock when necessary. As stock can automatically be ordered when required, stock outs have been almost completely eliminated and if there is a delay in getting the stock, managers can be kept up to date with automatically generated e-mails sent by the WMS.

A common problem before the new WMS was reservation of stock. If a customer had reserved a certain product there was no way of communicating this to the picking staff in the warehouse. Therefore, customers who had reserved stock were often disappointed when it came to shipping, as the goods had already been picked for other orders. Now the WMS totally controls sending out stock and problems with reserved stock being re-sold are eliminated, resulting in increased customer satisfaction.

Before shipping, the system generates a barcode label applied to the goods being sent to customers. Previously labels were hand written, which meant contact details were often written incorrectly and therefore shipping errors occurred. The new system now prints thermal transfer labels using a Datamax W-6208, which include the correct shipping and product information.

Company Overview

Supreme Imports Ltd are the largest battery and recordable media distributors in the UK, selling over 180 million battery cells each year. Supreme Imports was established in 1970 and their distribution depot is based in Trafford Park, Manchester. They offer a full range of branded batteries, photographic film and recording media from industry giants like Duracell, Panasonic, Sony and Samsung. Visit Supreme at

www.supreme-imports.co.uk

How it started

Barcode-IT were originally introduced to Supreme Imports through Supreme's existing Sage Line 100 supplier. After a site visit to view a comparable warehouse management system that Barcode-IT has installed at Jacobs Bakery, Supreme felt that Barcode-IT's previous dealing with WMS coupled with their good value for money made them the best partner for their project.

Product Portfolio

- PSC Falcon 4420 scanners
- Datamax W-6208 printers
- Cisco 1200 access points
- Sage Line 100

