



CAN A WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (WMS) BENEFIT THE FOOD INDUSTRY?

INTRODUCTION

Globalization of the food supply chain, consumer demand, and government regulations are making traceability crucial to food manufacturers. Products need to be tracked and quickly located in case of a recall. Real-time agile supply chain management solutions make this possible for food manufacturers and increase the safety of our food.



Provision WMS Provides the following:

- Visibility of all warehouse processes
- Centralization of Data
- Tracking of material and product movements
- Real-time notifications for faster decision making
- Enhanced pick-and-pack capabilities
- Streamlined packaging and cross-docking

HOW DOES A WMS BENEFIT THE FOOD INDUSTRY?

Since the products you make could be damaged, contaminated, or expired before they reach the customer, you need to take special care of the entire production and supply chain process. Even a tiny mistake in daily operations can cause mayhem, recalls, and lost profits. It is important to always maintain a high level of oversight. This is where Provision WMS comes in.

A WMS can benefit the food industry:

1. Product and Batch Traceability

In the food industry, traceability is not an option. The FDA in the USA and the CFIA in Canada require that every food and beverage producer or distributor be able to track an item or material through the production and supply chain. By being able to scan a barcode and register an item or material in your system automatically with a WMS, so to enhance the traceability of all products.



Why is food traceability important?

Food traceability is an industry requirement, and one of the main reasons for this is an increased emphasis on food safety and the prevention of food-borne illnesses before they happen. Current regulations in the USA and Canada require many in the food and beverage industry to track and document one step forward (Where food has gone) and one step back (Food's immediate previous source).

To keep up with new food production and delivery methods, FDA AND CFIA are taking a new approach to food safety. Both organizations are leveraging technology to create a safer and more digitally traceable food system. The goal of the new steps is to establish a standard approach to traceability and encourage the food industry to use more digital systems in the future.

Traceability helps respond quickly to recalls.

Recalls happen when you least expect them and have big implications for business. Revenue is lost because of recalled products and long-term damage is done to your brand that can take years to repair.

Having a barcode and label scanning system in place that provides traceability allows a business to act immediately when a recall happens. A digital system like Provision WMS can associate ingredients with finished products and provide instant information. You can then quickly determine which ingredients are affected, locate the products that have already been sold, and notify the customers.

Traceability can be achieved by all food and beverage manufacturers. Whether you are a large or small food manufacturer, barcode labels and scanning can be used to track inventory and products in real time. The Provision WMS tools provide lot traceability which tracks each ingredient for a product through the entire supply chain and allows you to locate products quickly. This saves time and money and increases food safety.

2. Inventory control and visibility

With Provision WMS you can scan the barcode or RFID tag on a product or material and update the entire system. This visibility is important for many reasons. First, you can prevent lost items or stock errors. For the food industry, increased inventory control and visibility are essential when arranging merchandise and selecting which products need to be moved.

Using Provision WMS warehouse management system provides insight into each piece of inventory, including its location, SKU, value, expiration date, and more. Based on this data, you can make decisions that minimize damages.



Benefits of Barcodes for the Warehouse Management System

Barcodes can be incredibly beneficial for warehouse management systems. They can help to reduce errors, improve efficiency, and streamline processes.

One of the most significant advantages of barcodes is they can help reduce errors. Automating processes can ensure that items are stored and shipped correctly.

Barcodes can also be used to improve efficiency in reducing the time spent on manual tasks, such as retrieving items from shelves, this can help reduce costs and improve productivity. Barcodes are one of the unsung heroes of warehouse management systems. They may seem like mundane technology, but they can be incredibly impactful and beneficial in a warehouse setting. They can also provide customers with more accurate information about their orders and help improve the overall customer experience.

Benefits of RFID for the Warehouse Management System

RFID cuts labor costs considerably. It also improves efficiency while in many cases RFID essentially eliminates the potential for human error. Because information transfers remotely and automatically, warehouse items are less prone to fall through the cracks.

Because updates are in real-time, warehouse employees possess the ability to halt the distribution of a recalled product, for instance, by isolating its exact location in the supply chain.

3. Enhanced put-away Practices

Using Provision WMS can decrease unloading and put-away time by selecting the quickest routes in the warehouse, logically distributing the items, optimizing space, and more. You can also manage the layout of a warehouse based on temperature, demand patterns, and expiration dates.

Put-away Process Objectives:

The prime objective of the put-away process is to move goods from the dock to the most optimal warehouse storage location.

At the heart of the process is assuring that:

- Product is stored fast and efficiently
- Warehouse travel distance is reduced to a minimum
- Security of goods and safety of warehouse employees is ensured
- Warehouse space is maximized
- Cargo is easy to find and track within the warehouse
- Goods are stored in a location that is quick and easy to retrieve during the picking process.

Failing to properly implement an efficient process will have a direct impact on the productivity of warehouse operations.

4. Decreased Human Error

One of the most valued capabilities of a WMS is the ability to assign tasks and designated picking pathways, not only does this reduce the need for paper, but it also reduces human error, which results in faster packaging and shipping. Since all information in the WMS is correct, your employees can also find items much quicker, instead of spending precious time searching for misplaced or out-of-stock items.

10 COMMON PROBLEMS WITH ORDER PICKING AND HOW TO SOLVE THEM

Problem 1

Not finding the correct items in the locations.

Impact

If an item is not where it should be in the warehouse, this means the picker needs to spend time looking for it. This delays the order fulfillment, which can lead to an unhappy customer. On top of that, it also makes for a highly inefficient warehouse operation.

How to solve it

With the Provision WMS warehouse management system, every item is scanned into a location. This means that when a picker is looking for an item, it will always be exactly where it should be.

Problem 2

Pickers make mistakes which means the wrong items or quantities are picked.

Impact

If the wrong items or quantities are picked, time is wasted at the pack bench where, hopefully, the error is noticed. If the fault is not realized, the wrong items are dispatched which will result in a return. As well as costing money, it also creates friction with your brand.

How to solve it

Get goods in right the first time by scanning everything. Using barcode scanners in your warehouse should make it impossible to pick the wrong items or the wrong quantities. With every incorrect pick, the scanner will create an error message, alerting the picker to their error.

As a final check for orders that have been picked in a batch, you may also benefit from scanning the items again at the point of dispatch to ensure you match the right items to each shipping label.

Problem 3

You have paper-based picking

Impact

With this kind of operation, a paper must be printed and carried with the picker. This is not only a lengthy process, but also highly inefficient and leaves a large margin of error due to lost or unfulfilled orders.

How to solve it

Eliminate paper from your warehouse by using a warehouse management system (WMS). When you remove the margin for human error, you're in a good position to ensure that you're able to ship every order on time, and accurately without fail.

Problem 4

No prioritization when picking

Impact

If your orders are not prioritized, then often the most recent sales order items are picked first by default. This can mean that older orders or more important orders are neglected or delayed.

How to solve it

To solve this problem Provision WMS has the capability of sorting the sales orders by time and date with options for priority orders. By using a WMS, will make sure that no orders are left over at the end of the day.

Problem 5

Labor intensive picking

Impact

If you have too many pickers working at the same time, you will likely be spending more money on labor, biting into your profits. Overtime may creep in and sometimes deadlines for fulfillment are missed.

How to solve it

The most efficient way to reduce the number of pickers needed for a single shift is to introduce automation in your warehouse operations. Automation should improve the efficiency of all aspects of your warehouse operation. Reducing costs and fulfilling orders on time. With automated processes, you can take the panic out of peak periods. Provision WMS is easy to use and easy to train.

Problem 6

No designated location for half-picked orders

Impact

Orders that are only half-picked are generally put back if the remaining items are not available, and fulfillment is postponed. This leads to a bad customer experience and negative reviews. Shipping half orders also increase your shipping costs.

How to solve it

The ultimate solution is to manage your allocations properly, Provision WMS will help solve your warehouse workflows and improve warehouse efficiencies for good.

Problem 7

Picking one order in one pick run.

Impact

This is an inefficient process that wastes valuable time and resources. It also makes order fulfillment longer.

How to solve it

The reason that one order is generally picked in one pick run is that it is printed on a sheet of paper. However, by eliminating paper and using Provision WMS workflows instead, pick runs can be devised in the most efficient manner, which can often mean multiple pickers pick items in one order as part of a batch run. The order is then combined at the pack bench, saving time and resources.

Problem 8

You're reliant on people remembering where things are in the warehouse.

Impact

Time is required to train pickers on the layout of the warehouse. When peak session hits and temporary staff are taken on, the same training can not be afforded. Having this reliance on your pickers to know where everything is will cost time and money without a sufficient return.

How to solve it

With Provision WMS every SKU can be recorded. This means when an item needs to be picked, the location is presented in the system, eliminating the need for pickers to memorize the locations. This also means temporary pickers can start using the system immediately.

Problem 9

You have fixed locations – every item has its place, except when that space is full, then it's stored in the overstock location...wherever that is...

Impact

Having fixed locations eliminates the potential for flexibility to allocate high-demand items closer to the pack bench when necessary. It also means that warehouse space is not fully optimized, costing money and resources. Inefficiency here means replenishment becomes a big issue.

How to solve it

Introduce Provision WMS it allows for dynamic locations. This will mean that you can put multiple stock-keeping units (SKUs) in one location, as well as put single SKUs in multiple locations. By doing this, you will make much better use of the space in your warehouse.

Problem 10

You can't trace who picked the order.

Impact

Not having this type of visibility means that you are unable to assess the efficiency of your staff, as well as tracking the progress of an order. This may mean that you can not communicate with customers regarding the status of their orders.

How to solve it

Provision WMS with a focused workflow will provide you with full visibility on all inventory movements, including which employees performed each action. You need this focus to have full control over your warehouse processes and to eliminate warehouse chaos.

5. Increased Productivity

Assigning tasks to the workforce and managing your inventory is time-consuming and complex. It helps when your operation is automated through a WMS like Provision WMS. Our warehouse management system enables activity tracking, task assignment, real-time data reporting, and much more. For example, you can increase productivity by reviewing the locations of the employees and the items and then choosing which employee is closest to the item. Assign the nearest employee to retrieve the item, thereby saving time and energy.



Get higher productivity with Provision WMS

Utilizing a warehouse management system like Provision WMS can help control even the most complex processes within your warehouse facility. If you are selling food or beverages, a WMS can reduce the risk of mistakes, accelerate productivity, and give you higher profits. Implementing a WMS also ensure the quality of your products. It's time to take advantage of a WMS and begin seeing results. Provision WMS has a solution that suits your organization.

**Give us a call or schedule a demo at
www.provisionwms.com**