Beyond Legacy Systems:
A Warehouse Management System Experience

Executive Summary

Warehouse management systems (WMS) control inventory and distribution, and every day organizations are looking for ways to improve employee productivity, keep expenses low and improve customer service. But warehouse operations require deep functionality in order to enable successful partner collaboration and flexible, global supply chains. Core warehouse functions such as inbound receiving, put-away, picking, shipping and loading must coordinate

Softeon & TCG pave the way to business excellence

with other supply chain processes like forecasting and inventory planning, to maximize efficiency. On the manufacturing floor, in the warehouse, at the distribution center or out in the field, the ability to make improvements in the business takes time, technology and strong partnerships.

TCG and Softeon have aligned to provide a customized experience with innovative technology to streamline operations and offer an attractive ROI. In this paper, we will define the supply-chain challenges that many organizations

experience, explain the types of data collection technology that works best in warehouse and distribution center (DC) environments, and the critical nature of partnering with the right provider for the design, implementation and support of an automated warehouse management solution.

The Task at Hand

Management of your supply chain can be a daunting task. It takes a lot of resource to stay on top of the flow of business – all while keeping your customers and shareholders happy. Over time, legacy systems and manual-based processes can dramatically affect business growth, worker performance, productivity, profitability and customer satisfaction. Today's supply chain automation tools offer resources for demand management, inventory management, assembly & kitting, yard management, direct store delivery, order management and more.

When organizations are operating using manual processes, the combination of business changes and processes tend to

Softeon + TCG = Warehouse Automation Excellence

Common Warehouse and Distribution Center Issues

- ➤ Managing the accuracy of data manually entered into the system

- ➤ Changing warehouse set-up or re-slotting of products

- ➤ Reducing the time it takes to perform cycle counts manually

- ➤ Reducing operating costs

- ➤ Retrieving inventory location information

- ➤ Accurately filling and/or shipping orders

- ➤ Improving productivity and optimizing labor

collide. Without the right solution, changes such as rapid growth, changes in business landscape, or process changes dictated by your customers could be negatively impacted.

Complex operations in the warehouse depend on technology to streamline processes. Manual tasks slow down worker productivity and can cost organizations millions of dollars in lost inventory, missing shipments, and unhappy customers. Add to that the multi-channel operation (store front retail, catalog, e-commerce) and you've created even more operational challenges. Evaluate on a task-by-task basis the types of issues your business and employees are facing. From there, a solution partner can help you select the best software applications and data collection devices that are best for your environment. **TCG and Softeon** are ideally teamed, and their solutions are complementary; working together to provide seamless integration of your unique hardware and software needs.

Avoid the Pitfalls

You need a solution to help you drive productivity without increasing costs or affecting product quality. Empowering your workers with the ability to be hands-on or hands-free enables improved performance, real-time information and operational effectiveness. If you're running your business on a legacy system, or if manual processes dominate worker tasks, it can result in:

- • **increased labor hours**
- • **inability to quickly locate product**
- • **inability to accurately re-stock product**
- • **increased costs due to picking, packing or shipping errors**

An organization does not have to be large to feel the effects of a legacy system. Order errors and increasing labor costs can quickly drive down the profitability of a business and limit growth.

When an organization utilizes a legacy system that requires extensive custom configuration to align with changes in business process, the likelihood of these changes taking place are slim due to the exorbitant amount of resource and funding required to implement.

Since programming legacy systems are often cost prohibitive, organizations are forced to slow down their rate of growth or limit their ability to operate the business at an optimum level.

With a WMS system, the results are dramatic in all areas of the business. Some have seen increases of 20-40% in picking accuracy in the first 6 months. In terms of real-time information, the ability to access current inventory counts and locations dramatically improves ability to process orders. Having 100% visibility can improve order turnaround time by as much as 25% in the first few months of implementation.

What's in a Workday?

75% of the work day is spent locating and picking product

...and **60% of that time** is spent walking all over the warehouse

WMS solutions offer real-time information & point-of-work mobile devices

Why WMS?

- ➤ Flexible configuration

- ➤ Rules-based solutions that adapt to change

- ➤ Intelligent analytics with KPI's and forward-looking actionable items

- ➤ Powerful integration with Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Material Handling Equipment (MHE)

Putting your WMS into Action

As improvements to warehouse operations are being planned, the best course of action includes technology designed to work the way you do. High-performance and fast implementation are almost always desired, but rarely delivered.

TCG and Softeon work together, and time is spent focusing on the functional areas of your operation that will optimize resources and ensure timely execution of events. Following industry best-practice standards can accelerate productivity and efficiency improvements in and around your warehouse.

Although it may vary from one organization to another, there are three key practices most common across markets:

1 **The ability to view data in real-time** – know what is happening at a high level in order to make informed decisions

2 **Automate where it makes sense** – understand the ROI; the biggest benefit will come from reduced labor hours and controlled costs

3 **Set goals and measure results** – metrics allow us to make improvements and evaluate results.

Getting Started

As you begin to build your warehouse automation plan, establish specific goals for your business and take a look at business rules that would benefit from a refresh. Automating functions in the warehouse can yield huge cost savings and improved productivity.

For example, **mobile devices bring the worker to the point-of-work** without taking the time to travel back and forth to a work desk to enter information. Manual processes that force end-of-day batching can be eliminated when the task is automated with little or no manual keying of data. The same is true with a vehicle-mount computer or hands-free picking.

The next step is to create a list of ideal features for your WMS; for example, an intuitive interface, easily configurable, access to a variety of reporting tools, database security, etc. Once you've established your goals and features you require, it's time to choose an integration partner.

The partnership between **TCG and Softeon** alleviates the complexity and difficult decisions often left to the customer to decide. When you work with **TCG and Softeon**, you can be assured that every step in the process and every component in the solution will be explored.

Our goal is to provide you with tools that offer operating excellence; delivering features and functionality critical to your existing business, and future-proofed for growth and environmental change.

WMS Goals

➤ Supply chain visibility

➤ 99% On-time shipments

➤ Improved order picking

➤ 100% customer satisfaction

➤ Reduced/eliminated overtime hours

➤ Flexibility to grow with the WMS system

WMS Solution Success Story

Situation

➤ 400,000 sq ft facility

➤ Daily order rate as high as 100,000

➤ Using manual processes

➤ Using legacy system

Solution

➤ WMS system to manage operations

➤ Order management solution

➤ Barcode scanning equipment to automate processes

Results

➤ Increased worker productivity due to real-time visibility

➤ Significant reduction in shipping costs

➤ Integrated, modernized process

➤ Increased customer satisfaction due to order accuracy

Softeon WMS is a functionally rich, highly versatile, and easy-to-use system to manage warehouse and DC operations at higher levels of efficiency and productivity. This includes application solutions which provide real-time control over inbound, outbound and inventory management processes.

Dolphin™ 70e

TCG is a premier provider of barcode and RFID data collection solutions. TCG's approach to data automation utilizes advanced industry technology standards, superior development skills and data collection and RFID solutions from manufacturers such as Honeywell Scanning & Mobility.

The hardware you select is just as important as the software application you choose. Warehouse applications require mobile computing devices designed for harsh environments, drops to concrete, fluctuating temperatures, low-light and long hours.

Dolphin® 9900

Honeywell

With data collection devices from industry leaders like Honeywell Scanning & Mobility, you can be assured that the barcode scanner, voice-activated device, vehicle-mount computer or other mobile scanning device has been tested in real-world environments to provide the reliability expected in a demanding application.

Warehouse Management Solution Benefits

➤ Improve order fulfillment

➤ Gain real-time warehouse visibility

➤ Improve resource efficiency

➤ Increase inventory accuracy

➤ Enhance labor productivity

TCG and Softeon Work to Make Warehouse Automation Work for You.

Whether your goals are rapid onboarding, superior customer service or maximum profitability, the WMS solution provided by **TCG and Softeon** adapts to your unique requirements. As your business grows, our WMS solution easily scales to support your needs. In addition to WMS, our suite of solutions support supply chain planning and execution in a variety of industries that require improved efficiencies in warehouse management, order management, vendor-managed inventory, assembly and kitting, direct store delivery, route accounting and many other areas of the business.

Together, **TCG and Softeon** offer superior solution architecture, innovative technology and rapid integration services to streamline the flow of business and deliver a fast ROI. Our partnership represents the industry expertise and business recommendations from decades of research and development in each of the markets we serve. Our modular, supply chain management solutions allow you to achieve business excellence by developing the agility to respond to changes in your business environment and provide outstanding customer service.

Interested in Learning More?

Our warehouse data collection and inventory scanning solutions supply warehouses with a complete set of rugged tracking tools built to maximize your ROI. Upgrade your inventory management system with RFID technology to track extensive inventories, and incorporate mobile devices to empower your employees. Let the experts at **TCG and Softeon** assist you in customizing a specific WMS solution to increase your warehouse efficiencies.

To schedule a complimentary warehouse walk-thru, contact us today: sales@tcgbarcode.com or contact@softeon.com.

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