

# How **User Friendly** is Your WMS?



A Guide By  **datex**  
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# The Case for Why Your Business Needs a User Friendly WMS

## How the WMS User Experience Can Affect Your Business Performance

What is the User Experience (UX)? The user experience defines how software users feel when interacting with the system. Factors such as usability, accessibility, navigation, system performance, aesthetics, utility, ergonomics and overall human interaction are key. Having a good user experience helps to drive system user adoption-critical to ROI.

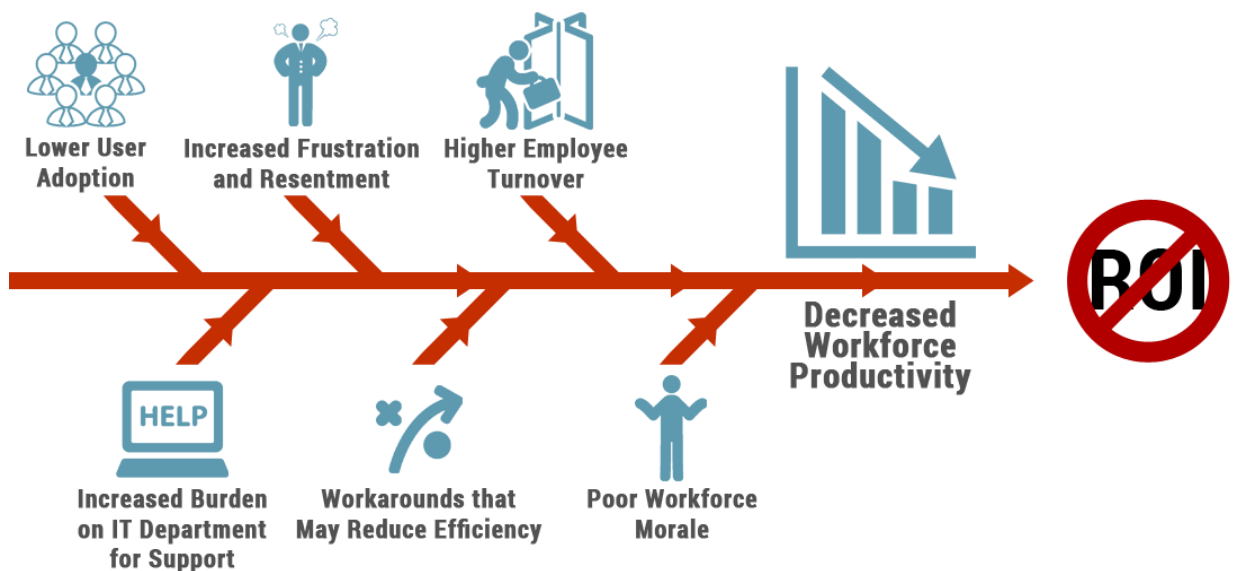
When it comes to enterprise systems like WMS, often application complexity is one of the reasons why businesses sometimes fail to fully realize the ROI they anticipate. Software users who commonly use consumer-based software applications may find enterprise software to be unduly complex and hard to understand. This is often largely due to the extensive functionality that the supply chain software vendor is trying to pack into the application. When software companies acquire other applications, the problem may be multiplied. Systems that were not designed to work together do not “flow”. The graphical user interface (GUI), amount of log-ins and clicks can make this incredibly frustrating for software users.

## How the Warehouse Management Software User Experience May Affect Your Business

Implementing a complex system that is not user friendly causes additional problems. In purchasing a new warehouse management system, the company expects users to learn the new system, integrate it into their daily work processes and use it proficiently. Projections are often done on having full workforce adoption.



The picture is actually quite different for warehouse management systems that are not user friendly. In these cases, employees find the new software hard to learn and master and challenging to integrate with other systems, such as other enterprise software products that have already been installed. CTOs and IT Directors frequently report that workforce productivity actually decreases. This is especially typical when common or critical processes take longer with the new software.



Having a WMS that is not user friendly can also result in reduced employee morale, increased turnover as well as frustration and resistance. Typically when businesses mandate use of WMS systems that are not user friendly, the user population becomes more resistant and adoption declines.

In this case, not having a user friendly WMS can create additional problems. In these organizations there tends to be an increased number of support requests. IT departments can become overwhelmed by this. Backlogs in working on these and other projects can occur.

Use of warehouse management systems that are not user friendly often results in users finding workarounds, poorer adoption rates and disappointing ROI. On the flip side, having warehouse management software that is user friendly can help to reduce training costs.

## Here are some Critical Factors to Consider When Evaluating Warehouse Management Systems

### Intuitiveness of the Warehouse Management Software

- Is the warehouse software organized in a way that makes the users comfortable?
- Use a familiar user interface (UI)?
- Is the warehouse software simple to understand and navigate?
- Does the WMS software require complicated manuals, diagrams and instructions to learn, use and master?
- Will it be difficult to train temporary or seasonal workers to use the software?



## Warehouse Management System Interoperability with Other Supply Chain & Operations Systems

- How well does the warehouse management system handle integrations with other systems that were not developed by the same software vendor?
- How well does the WMS handle transactions across applications?
- Is the flow of necessary information seamless across all systems?

## Portability and Access to the Warehouse Management System

- Can users access the WMS from other locations?
- Can the warehouse management system be accessed using a variety of different devices?
- Does the WMS help to create more effective channels of communication in the workforce?

## The Importance of Getting WMS Software Users' Feedback

Why is getting feedback from software users so critical to enabling a good user experience? Not only does the software vendor hear from people who use the warehousing software day in and day out, but also a greater sense of ownership and community bonding occurs when feedback is sought. Your WMS software vendor should encourage and facilitate feedback from system users-perhaps through webinars, software user conferences and other means.



## WMS User Experience from the IT Department Perspective

When evaluating warehouse management systems, companies should also consider the perspective of the IT department. Relying on software that is frustrating to use can cause costly problems for the IT department, resulting in project delays, overtime and additional expenses.

- Is the WMS simple to install?
- How challenging and time consuming is it to update?
- How dependent are you on the software vendor to perform system updates?
- How hard is it for your team to troubleshoot issues with the software before putting in a call to the software vendor's support department?
- How reliable is the software? Do you find that you are having continual complaints from users about screens freezing up, stalled processes, etc.?

## How User Friendly is Your WMS?

- Is your user interface densely packed with information?
- Is your system difficult to navigate?
- Does your system require users to navigate through multiple screens to complete transactions?
- Do your users feel that your system is smooth and intuitive?
- Does your software vendor pay attention to the specific requests and feedback of system users?
- Does your warehouse management software require too many clicks? Movement between too many screens?
- Do your users have to enter the same information into multiple screens?

# Conclusion

If your business is working with or considering warehouse management software that is not user friendly and think this will not have any impact on your business, think again.

Relying on a WMS that does not provide a good user experience can result in the following problems, all which can have a negative effect on the profitability of your operation:

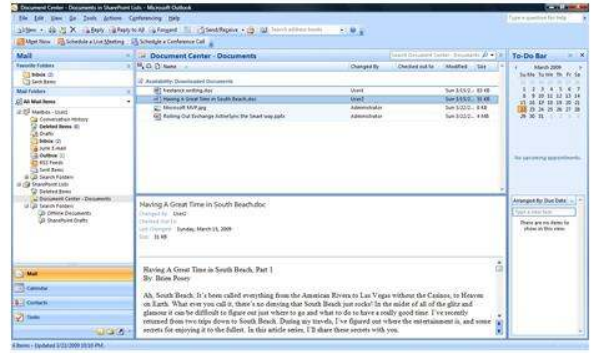
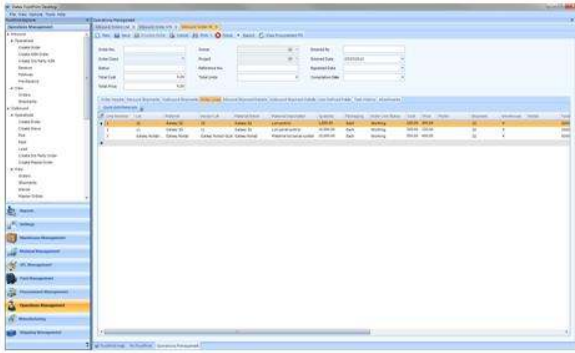
- Lower system user adoption
- Increased workforce frustration and resentment
- Poor workforce morale
- Higher employee turnover
- Increased burden on IT department for support
- Workarounds that may reduce operational efficiency
- Decreased workforce productivity

# Why Select User Friendly Datex Software?

**Here are just a few of our many user friendly features that help provide an excellent User Experience:**

- Familiar user interface immediately helps to put system users at ease
- System that is intuitive and easy to learn, use and master
- Ability to customize views by user helps keep your workforce focused and on track
- Ability to filter data. Many Datex FootPrint WMS screens contain filterable fields for easier data searching
- Ability to show and hide columns
- Dockable windows
- Ability to add user defined fields (UDFs)
- Real time alerts and notifications that can be customized to each user
- Faster system speed reduces frustration and wasted time
- Easy integrations with other systems
- Ability to attach and house documents, images, video-any file type to inventory records
- Drag and drop customizable reporting enables users to create reports in the format of choice including charts, graphs, dashboards and more
- 3PL Billing Wizard helps to ensure faster, easier and more accurate billing set up
- Tabbed windows position key functions all within the same window to reduce or eliminate moving from screen to screen. This also helps to improve data accuracy.





Datex developed Microsoft-based supply chain software including **Datex FootPrint® WMS** and has attained the highest level of Microsoft Gold Partner Competency for Software Application Development, the highest level of partnership in the Microsoft network.

# Microsoft® GOLD CERTIFIED Partner

Award-winning software used across the world in warehousing, distribution, manufacturing 3PL and other supply chain operations.



## About Datex

Datex provides flexible, reliable supply chain technology solutions to help make businesses more profitable, including supply chain software, mobility solutions, professional services and mobile device management. In business for over 35 years, Datex has a wealth of experience in helping companies across the world meet these critical business challenges.

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