

Crane Worldwide Logistics Case Study

About Crane Worldwide Logistics

Headquartered in Houston Texas, Crane Worldwide Logistics is a full-service air freight, ocean freight, trucking, supply chain solutions, customs brokerage and transportation logistics company. Founded in 2008, Crane Worldwide Logistics (CWW) is a relationship-based organization that has a firm belief in “the personal touch” with its customers. In rapid growth mode, CWW has over 113 offices in 25 countries and provides services to a wide range of industries including aerospace, automotive, energy, healthcare, hi-tech/telecom, industrial/manufacturing, retail and trade shows.

Although transportation is the primary specialty, CWW warehousing services have been expanding worldwide. CWW also provides freight consolidation services, deconsolidation services FCL, LCL and temperature controlled transportation. With 18 warehouses across the globe and sales exceeding \$574 million, CWW continues to expand.

At the time of this case study, Datex FootPrint WMS had been implemented in 15 warehouse facilities.

The Challenge

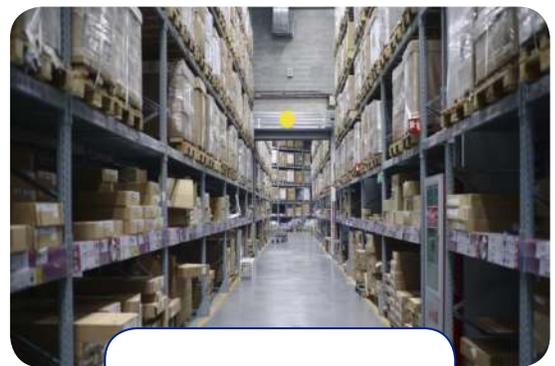
Warehouse Management Software Requirements

CWW began the search for a warehouse management software solution because its existing system was unable to keep pace with its growth and increasingly complex customer demands. In searching for a warehouse management system, CWW needed a more robust, customizable supply chain software solution. A number of deployment models and options were evaluated before selecting Datex FootPrint® WMS.

In using its original warehouse management system, CWW encountered challenges that inhibited its ability to onboard new clients and scale its business. The existing WMS architecture featured individual environments for each customer account. This made adding new customers to the WMS problematic and cost prohibitive in terms of implementation.

In addition, the existing warehouse management software solution lacked flexibility. “3PLs are not a one size fits all type of business. Having the ability to quickly make changes to meet customer requirements helps our operations run much more efficiently. Before Datex, this was a problem we were always trying to solve” explained Kevin McKay, Product Manager.

They need to be able to accommodate the varying needs of many different types of clients and their various requirements. They felt that using workflow would provide them with the flexibility needed to run their operation.



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The Solution

Datex FootPrint WMS and Zebra Mobile Computing Devices

The initial Houston implementation, CWW's flagship location is a 75,000 square foot warehouse that had 1,000,000+ units on hand at any given time. This facility served one customer, received 100-200 lines per day and had a picking volume of 300-400 lines per day. The 3PL customer expected a 24 hour turnover.

Datex 3PL Warehouse Management System

EDI services and Integrations for TMS, ERP and carousel were required elements of the WMS software implementation. A web portal was required to provide 3PL customers with 24/7 real time data access and reporting. In addition, CWW needed to be able to configure picking in waves or by zones and required the ability to create receiving labels for products.



Here are some of the additional project requirements for the warehousing software:

- Activity tracking with user ID visibility
- Email and alert notifications that could be customized
- Flexible receiving options
- Master handling units so that all contents in the handling unit could be transferred at one time
- Customized reporting
- Exception management
- Customizable allocation rules
- Location assignments
- Crossdocking without inventory rules
- Purchase order management



Zebra Mobile Computing Hardware

CWW required RF for receiving, putaway, transfer, picking and cycle counting. In selecting mobile devices, it was important that the mobile computing devices were able to scan 3D barcodes.

At the time of the WMS selection, CWW was not using any mobile computing devices, only laptop computers. In selecting mobile computing handheld devices, CWW looked for performance, ease of use and competitive pricing. Zebra MC9090 fit the bill. Over time, Zebra MC9190 devices were also purchased.

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The Solution- continued

Since implementing the integrated technology solution provided by Datex and Zebra, CWW now has improved its ability to track and trace inventory and now has real time inventory visibility. Now mobile devices and streamlined processes are used to gain efficiency and improve workforce productivity. "Using Datex software and Zebra mobile devices helps us in tying off the physical processes to the systemic, closer to the actual point of action" explained McKay.

By using Zebra mobile computing devices, CWW workers can now quickly scan and capture serial numbers when barcodes are present from the customer. "Using the mobile devices with the software provides more real time visibility and gives us the opportunity to react more quickly" said McKay.

The Results

Faster Revenue Collection from the Onboarding of New 3PL Customers

Onboarding of new 3PL customers has been much smoother with Datex FootPrint WMS. Using the combination of Zebra mobile computing devices with Datex warehousing software has improved workforce productivity and enabled Crane Worldwide Logistics to be more responsive in meeting the needs of its supply chain clients. Being able to onboard new clients faster helps third party logistics providers to be able to collect revenue more quickly.

Labor Savings and Gains in Workforce Productivity

As an example of labor savings, McKay explained that one operation originally involved processing 600 line items a day with a labor team of 25 warehouse workers. Now, using Datex WMS software and Zebra MC9190 devices, this operation takes only 10 hours to process using a team of 14 workers in 8 hour shifts, a savings of 88 labor hours.

Another area of improvement for CWW is reporting. "For us, it is critical to be able to be more flexible. We can modify reports with the reporting tool in the application to provide data quickly in the exact format that our different customers want to see" explained McKay. The ability to provide customized reports, automated alerts to notify customers of status changes and other issues has provided noticeable benefits.

"Between reporting and increased visibility, using the new Datex WMS has allowed us to identify inventory discrepancies and resolve them more quickly" reported McKay.

Using Datex FootPrint WMS enabled CWW to handle serial number validation more effectively so that exceptions could be flagged immediately for easier visibility and remediation.



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The Results - Continued

Datex Workflow Enables Flexible Operations to Suit Individual Customer Needs

Crane Worldwide Logistics relies on the power of Microsoft workflows to help streamline operations and improve the user experience. Workflows have been used to automate activities to ensure compliance with customer requirements, streamline operations and data entry. This also helps to ensure that all the data needed by the customer is provided, resulting in greater customer satisfaction.

Zebra Mobile Computing Hardware and Datex WMS Software Improve Visibility and Inventory Management Capabilities

Using automated data collection with a state-of-the-art Microsoft-based warehouse management system has enabled CWW with real time inventory visibility and enhanced inventory management capabilities. Use of the new Zebra-Datex technology provides WMS system users with the tools needed to collect, reconcile and post inventory counts by triggering physical inventory/cycle counting.

Zebra-Datex Technology Solutions Optimize Inbound and Outbound Operations

Use of automated data collection and Datex warehousing software now enables the tracking of all inbound and outbound operations by CWW.

Datex End-to-End Solution Helped to Streamline Implementation and Keep Costs under Control

In implementing a technology solution, limiting the number of vendors in the process helps to ensure that the solution will be implemented in the most cost effective, affordable manner. CWW found value in purchasing both mobile computing hardware and WMS software from Datex. Acting as a turnkey vendor, Datex provisioned the Zebra mobile computing devices and handled the configuration. Datex can remotely access and can troubleshoot any issues that arise with the mobile handheld devices to help ensure that the CWW workforce continually has the maximum uptime for its operation.

An additional benefit of selecting Datex is its ability to provide a discounted rate that enabled CWW to buy smaller quantities of devices as new warehouses were set up with the new warehouse management system. Doing so enabled CWW to eliminate a major capital expense outlay unnecessarily so that they did not have to stockpile devices until they were needed.

Recap:

Crane Worldwide Logistics selected Datex FootPrint WMS for its scalability and high level of flexibility. The use of Datex workflow is key to enabling CWW to meet the needs of the wide variety of its 3PL customers. Other important elements of the warehouse software solution include customizable reporting and alerts and notifications.

Used in combination with Zebra mobile computing hardware, Datex FootPrint WMS helped to enable CWW to be able to onboard new third party logistics customers more quickly, increase customer satisfaction rates, and improve labor productivity.



For more information on Crane, visit them on the web at:
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