

Hallis Hudson Increases Warehouse Throughput By 20%



Implementing BEC's eSmart Warehouse data capture system integrated with Infor M3 enables Hallis Hudson to increase warehouse throughput by 20%, redeploy 4 data entry employees and extend order shipment deadlines by 1 hour.

Business Issue

Hallis Hudson is a leading supplier of curtains, blinds and soft furnishings accessories. The company has a strong customer service ethos and ships fulfilled orders for next day delivery.

One of the main challenges Hallis Hudson faced was the accuracy, speed and timeliness of data capture relating to order shipments. Customers need to know the exact products and quantities placed into each shipment for full delivery traceability but problems occurred due to the nature of the business and complexity of customer orders. A single shipment often consisted of multiple packages packed in different warehouse zones.

Hallis Hudson was also using a manual, paper based system to record packed items, which slowed down data entry and resulted in mistakes being made. This in turn delayed despatch times and made tracing shipment contents difficult.

"BEC's data capture solution has massively improved customer service and we easily recouped our investment within 18 months," says Alastair Soper, Operations Director at Hallis Hudson Ltd.

The Journey

Hallis Hudson were updating their ERP system to the latest release of Infor M3 and this presented an opportunity to automate information flow across the company. Hallis Hudson realised that an investment in automated data capture would fulfil the need for accurate shipment information and free up the resources normally used to key data manually into the host ERP system. The inclusion of printer technology would enable the immediate printing of shipping labels for each consignment at the packing station.



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Operations Director at
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The Solution

BEC implemented eSmart Warehouse running on a range of mobile devices. Upon receipt of customer orders, Infor M3 uses logic to determine when and where to print picking lists within the warehouse. The order is assembled by a team of pickers, who then pass the goods for packing. Packing teams, using rugged handheld terminals via the WiFi network, scan item barcodes as they are picked and assembled into a shipment for the customer.

During the packing process, BEC's eSmart Warehouse data capture software communicates transaction data to Infor M3 in real time, enabling instant validation of packed items against the order. Once an order is packed, a list of the items inside the box is printed and fixed to the packaging exterior before it is closed for despatch.

Alastair Soper, Operations Director at Hallis Hudson commented, "The eSmart data capture solution allowed us to redeploy 4 people who were previously responsible for data entry into other areas of the business and we have also increased warehouse throughput by around 20% without the need for extra staff."

Using unique box numbers assigned by Infor M3, the data capture system records the items and quantity packed in each box, giving Hallis Hudson full traceability of deliveries. An automatic despatch notification is then sent to the Courier to arrange collection of the consignment. "Our improved shipping operations have enabled us to extend the shipment deadline by one hour, allowing customers to place next day delivery orders up until 6:00pm the previous day. The system is so efficient that we are considering extending this to 7:00pm, which will be a significant benefit for our customers, many of whom find it difficult to place orders during normal office hours," adds Alastair Soper.

Results

The automated data collection system used for shipping operations has already proved beneficial. Provided with real time capabilities, Hallis Hudson now receives immediate updates and full visibility of all shipment information as well as complete traceability of fulfilled orders. BEC's eSmart Warehouse data capture system has helped streamline packing operations and improved resource utilisation. By solving issues relating to the flow of shipment information, Hallis Hudson has improved relationships with their Courier Partner, reduced shipping costs by consolidating orders and improved customer service.

In summary: BEC's Added Value

- ▶ Helped Hallis Hudson improve resource utilisation and streamline operations
- ▶ Ensured seamless integration with existing Infor ERP
- ▶ Conducted full business process review to improve warehouse efficiency
- ▶ Ensured high levels of user acceptance and smooth project implementation.

