

K.Motion Warehouse Advantage

Driving efficiency and accuracy in warehouse management

Major Brands: Warehouse management system success



Wine and spirits distributor boosts efficiency with Körber warehouse management system.

Company profile

Major Brands is Missouri's highest volume distributor of premium spirits, wine and beer. It sells and distributes alcoholic beverages to more than 10,000 customers, including grocery stores, restaurants and retail outlets. On any given day, Major Brands delivers more than 40,000 bottles and 30,000 cases of products. It is a family-owned business that employs more than 700 people across the state and counts more than 5,000 products in its distribution portfolio.

Challenge

The growth of Major Brands made its pen-and-paper processes insufficient for monitoring production and truck-loading activities for thousands of customers. It was increasingly expensive and labor-intensive to accurately track the items moving through its St. Louis warehouse.

Quick facts: Major Brands

- **Distribution center:** St. Louis, Missouri
- **Retail stores:** more than 5,000
- **Total DC size:** 100,000 sq. ft.
- **Solution:** K.Motion Warehouse Advantage

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- Randy Simpson, director of operations at Major Brands



Solution

Major Brands selected K.Motion Warehouse Advantage, a highly adaptable, industry-leading solution that provides a directed, optimized workflow based on a foundation of best practices for receiving, put-away/flow-through, inventory management, replenishment and more. In addition, Major Brands was able to build its own company-specific business processes into the WMS. The ease of configuration gave the company a solution that could grow with it for years to come.

K.Motion Warehouse Advantage gave Major Brands total control and understanding of its inventory, tracking key data such as which items are in stock, where they are and their expiration dates. The company also tracks labor activities to determine what actions are in progress and which have already been completed. The WMS provides an automated driver check-in process and ensures that Major Brands receives the entire inventory it ordered.

Results

Major Brands' St. Louis warehouse has experienced a significant increase in efficiency since implementing Körber WMS. Despite higher volumes, shipping and picking accuracy has increased to more than 99.9 percent and finish times have remained constant or even below the prior year, in some cases. In addition, inbound freight is handled 20 percent more efficiently and replenishment inside the building is done 30 percent more effectively than before the WMS.

"We could not move the volume that we do now without Körber WMS," explained Randy Simpson, Director of Operations for Major Brands. "It tracks all of our key data, such as which items we have in stock, where they are and their expiration dates. It has allowed our company to grow and to improve our service to customers."

The adaptability of the WMS has also helped Major Brands more efficiently track inventory from one location to another. For example, employees are instructed whether to store product in a secondary bulk location or in the forward pick location if the inventory there is below minimum stock levels, as determined by customized parameters.

A painless upgrade

After several years of success with its WMS, Major Brands decided to upgrade the system to take advantage of increased functionality and new capabilities. Unlike many WMS providers, Körber allowed Major Brands to do much of the upgrade itself: Major Brands built the servers and base system and worked hand-in-hand with Körber on the infrastructure. The company installed the pieces and migrated data from the old environment to the new one. That resulted in a much lower total cost of ownership while allowing Major Brands to respond to changes in its business or the market.

"That was a big advantage for us," said Major Brands Software Developer Bill Schwein. "Körber was very flexible in allowing us to implement a big portion of the new WMS and worked closely with us to make sure everything went smoothly. We were able to test all features of the new WMS prior to installation, which gave us assurance that no customer service disruptions would take place during the actual implementation, while staying within our designated timeline. We have the highest respect for Körber in every regard."

Future plans

With the upgraded WMS, Major Brands has access to the Körber App Station, which allows users to browse and add new functionality to the WMS, much like a smartphone user would download apps to a device. That allows the business to take advantage of new features and functionality as soon as it is available without the need for any custom code or workflow interruption. With the App Station, Körber WMS can grow with Major Brands, accommodating new challenges and operations as needed.

