



INDUSTRY FOCUS ► **WAREHOUSING & LOGISTICS**

WMS increases deliveries by 25% and reduces costs by £100k



Evans Vanodine, an award winning manufacturer of a wide range of janitorial and livestock protection chemicals for both the home and overseas markets, has implemented **Indigo's WMS** software at its Lancashire warehouse to improve operational efficiency and customer service. Migrating from a traditional, paper-based warehouse management system to Indigo very quickly had a high impact on the business's performance ability to scale operations

Evans Vanodine exports to over 60 countries globally and operates four overseas manufacturing plants. Its continued contribution to British exports earned the company a Queen's Award in 2015. Before using Indigo's WMS, Evans Vanodine would receive customer orders manually, enter them into the sales system and print the associated picking notes. At this stage, stock would not have been allocated to an individual order and the associated picking note would be stored in a physical pigeonhole according to the customer's geographical location. As a paper-based system, there was no way for stock levels to be accurately checked once an order was confirmed and picking was managed according to regional delivery priorities.

With pickers unable to check stock availability before commencing, time would be wasted searching for stocks and roughly 20 per cent of deliveries were inevitably shipped incomplete. Although this was widely accepted among customers as normal industry practice, Evans Vanodine wanted to improve its service levels whilst also improving efficiency levels.

After reviewing a range of WMS technology options, the company chose to implement Indigo. This decision was made because of its integration with **Infor's** ERP system, real world functionality and proven track record for delivering high quality WMS solutions on time and within budget.

Within weeks of the 'go live', the benefits of using technology to manage warehouse processes became very apparent, as Evans Vanodine's Systems director, Anthony Evans explains.

"We have over 2,000 finished good SKUs which could be located in any of the 3,500 pallet spaces in the warehouse. Now we know exactly where all stock is located and what quantity is available for sale in real time. Once a customer places an order, we know straight away whether we can fulfill all their requirements and can inform them accordingly. The system is automatically updated on a continuous basis with stock allocations, ensuring any orders in the pool do have stock available to promise, avoiding incomplete shipments and disappointed customers."

COST SAVINGS

After implementing Indigo, Evans Vanodine now consistently achieves 98 per cent successful 'on time in full first time' delivery rates. This represents a significant achievement, especially considering the large number of individual SKUs stored in the warehouse and is a large improvement on its original 80 per cent success rate.

In addition, having an automated system ensures Evans Vanodine is better placed to cope with sudden peaks in demand for particular products, for instance, as a result of an infectious disease outbreak affecting livestock. "Having Indigo really helped during the

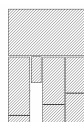
recent swine and avian flu crises, when we had unprecedented demand for specialised disinfectants and alcohol-based hand sanitisers and needed to ship huge volumes very quickly," says Evans.

Previously, Evans Vanodine would have relied on operatives working overtime to meet customer order requirements during periods of high demand but now, busy periods can be managed as part of its business as usual operations, across two standard shifts. The company has estimated its ability to avoid overtime labour costs and manage warehouse operations across just two shifts has saved well in excess of £100,000 over the past two years.

INVESTMENT BENEFITS

Data quality has also been significantly improved using Indigo and before beginning the picking process, operatives can check exactly what stock is available. This is useful because many customers place large orders comprising many different products and some may not be immediately available. "Now we can decide together with the customer whether to send the order partially complete or wait for all the items to be available. Having the ability to be so open when communicating with customers has made a big difference to overall satisfaction levels – for customers and operatives," adds Evans.

Over the past few years, the longer term strategic benefit of its investment in WMS



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technology has become clear and Evans Vanodine has estimated total business levels have increased by 10 per cent. This is in part due to its strong market reputation and also because customers have switched to Evans Vanodine as a supplier, thanks to the company's high overall product and service quality. Currently, stock order and delivery accuracy levels are 99.7 per cent. "We wanted to be able to differentiate ourselves with a superior customer service and have achieved that goal. Having the ability to tell customers in advance exactly what will be on their order is definitely a competitive advantage and our growth rates are a testament to this," says Evans.

Indigo

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Evans Vanodine now operates a more efficient warehouse and rarely requires workers to do overtime or work weekends at premium rates. Stock auditing is another aspect of warehouse management that has been improved since implementing Indigo, with Evans Vanodine now able to perform ongoing perpetual inventory checks