

PSSI Case Study: Alpha Systems, Inc.



Multi-site manufacturer ships more orders with less staff, fewer errors and improved accuracy with E-Z WMS Warehouse Manager...

Alpha Systems, Inc. is an Elkhart, Indiana based manufacturer of construction products and accessories to markets including recreational vehicle and manufactured housing, marine, roofing and housing. Since 1984, Alpha Systems has created a wide variety of largely plastics-based product lines to serve a growing range of customers and markets.

The company has multiple locations within the U.S. to better serve its clients. With that growth has come the logistical challenge of delivering finished products quickly and accurately to clients anywhere. One of the challenges Alpha Systems is successfully meeting these days is that of warehouse management and order fulfillment – the pick, pack and ship mechanics of getting product to clients on time and as expected.

A key reason for that success lies in Alpha System's intelligent application of the **E-Z WMS Warehouse Management System**, available today exclusively from Productivity Strategies & Solutions.

According to Accounting Supervisor **Stephanie Wright**, *E-Z WMS* provides the necessary checks and balances to ensure the Alpha Systems team that the contents of work orders are what they actually *shipped* from any of three plant locations. The fulfillment of orders is balanced: what manufacturing says it produced is confirmed on the warehouse side, so when manufacturing says "I made 5 pails" warehousing can say "I actually shipped 5 pails (to the right customer)."

The entire process is enabled via web-based handhelds which record all movements and transactions in the warehouse through a centralized server running *E-Z WMS*. Any variances are displayed on exception reports that can be matched against source documents to catch and correct errors quickly. Now, differences between production and warehousing or accounting are

caught and corrected the same day. Mistakes are minimized -- and becoming fewer -- as users become increasingly more accustomed to the easy-to-learn system.

Prior to using *E-Z WMS*, warehouse staff carried printed pick tickets to pull orders. Then they would hand-write what they pulled, with no way of accurately confirming a match to the order. Handwriting has now been largely eliminated -- along with most of the corresponding errors and legibility issues.

Now, warehouse crews use Radio Frequency (RF) handhelds with a WMS pick ticket that tells them exactly what bin location to go to and how many units to pick. It's so efficient that Alpha "has gained *more than a 25% increase in order ship rates* while total warehouse staff has actually *decreased*," according to VP of Operations **Eric Kronemeyer**.

The result is fewer errors, dramatically increased warehouse efficiency, faster pick, pack and ship, more accurate paperwork to customers, better internal reporting, along with elimination of handwriting, replaced by handheld scanners and bar-coding that virtually guarantee picking accuracy. There are fewer customer corrections and complaints, and product substitutions can now be accurately tracked and recorded on-the-fly.

As Eric notes, "Without this software, our shipping could never have kept up with our sales increases."

As Warehouse Manager **Sandy Garver** adds, "You feel twice as secure due to the system's checks and balances. The accounting matches the WMS, or at worst we can quickly identify and correct the variances." Even Alpha's auditors were amazed at how much more efficiently the year-end process went. The previous years' huge variances have been eliminated. That's a big plus, considering the tax implications of any year-end surprise inventory swings. As everyone agrees, eliminating these problems makes for a much less stressful time for all. ■

"E-Z WMS has eliminated all the spikes in our inventory counts. It has reduced mistakes, sped up shipping and made a major difference in our comfort level at year-end. It's unbelievable the difference it has made in a year." – Sandy Garver, Warehouse Manager, Alpha Systems, Inc.



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E-Z WMS is an easy-to-use, quick-to-learn, full-functioning warehouse management system that can be linked to our most popular accounting packages. E-Z WMS uses Internet-enabled handhelds to improve warehouse efficiency and accuracy, and can even be modified to fit your specific requirements. To learn how E-Z WMS can improve your warehouse, or to learn more about PSSI's premier manufacturing and distribution solutions, contact us today.