Musgrave rolls out WCS's mobility solution across supply chain in 90 days

Mobile handheld devices for drivers enable Musgrave to track deliveries in real-time from the warehouse to the shop-floor

Musgrave Retail Partners Ireland has increased the speed, accuracy and efficiency of store deliveries with a new enterprise-wide mobility solution, which is a fully-integrated extension of Worldwide Chain Stores warehouse management system.

The mobile solution, which was implemented in just 90 days, enables Musgrave to provide electronic proof of delivery to its retail partners, increasing vehicle and asset control, improving the store experience, reducing paperwork and eliminating errors. A number of additional features are being developed to support this investment and drive further efficiencies across the distribution network.

About the Musgrave Group

As Ireland's largest food and grocery distributor, The Musgrave Group works in partnership with independent retailers in Ireland, the UK and Spain, enabling them to better compete in price and quality, by leveraging scale and benefiting from advanced IT, finance and logistical expertise.

Each week, its fleet of 250 trucks makes 4,500 deliveries from its four distribution centres to over 900+ retail stores in Northern Ireland and the Republic, making it one of Ireland's biggest retail distribution networks.

The Business Challenge - A Supply Chain 'Blind Spot'

In 2009, Musgrave took the decision to introduce new 4-sided pallet cages to replace the legacy 2-sided cages for its chilled goods. The new pallet cages would create supply chain efficiencies since they were easier to 'pick to' and transport than the legacy cages; however the investment highlighted a data 'blind spot' in the Musgrave delivery process.

Stephen Bennett, Supply Chain Systems Manager, Musgrave Retail Partners Ireland, explains:

"Continuous investment in innovation meant that we had a very streamlined, efficient supply chain, but we identified a 'blind spot' in the delivery process from warehouse to store. We were still using a paper-based system."

For further information visit www.wwchainstores.com

WCS
Supply Chain Expertise. Delivered.

"The paper-based system made it difficult to track the pallet cages with any degree of accuracy. This caused a problem with managing the deposits that our retailer partners paid for these cages. We also wanted to streamline the delivery process, improve the store experience and improve fleet management processes in the longer-term."

The Business Challenge Summarised In Five Key Points

• Track pallet cages throughout the distribution network to protect our investment in new cages.
• Replace labour-intensive paper-based system for delivery management.
• Provide an improved experience for retail partners.
• Improve the accuracy of deposit management for the new pallet cages through closed loop audit.
• Increase supply chain visibility.
• Implement a future-proof mobile platform.

The Solution - Roll Out in 90 Days

Musgrave undertook thorough a survey of the marketplace and concluded that their warehouse management software partner WCS, offered a solution that most closely matched all of their requirements.

The solution comprised an Enterprise-wide Mobile Portal from WCS's mobility partner, Tlantic, which runs on handheld mobile devices operating Microsoft Windows Mobile Platform. An integration layer connects the mobile devices with WCS's warehouse management system. Realtime mobile GPRS data is transported by an O2 network. Motorola MC75 Barcode scanners and readers from Vision ID form the final solution component.

Stephen Bennett adds:

"This was a multi-faceted solution, involving a cross functional team. WCS led the implementation, supported by our Group Shared Services IT teams. Given the complexity of the solution, the 90 day roll-out was a remarkable achievement. The rollout included a trial period which enabled us to incorporate feedback from our drivers and store partners within the final solution."

The handheld devices present Musgrave's truck drivers with their route information; enabling them to scan a barcode on each pallet cage upon arrival at the stores. An electronic signature is collected, to provide proof-of-delivery. The WCS warehouse system is automatically updated with each data entry, providing real-time supply chain visibility of each delivery.

Results - Full ROI Within 10 Months

The solution is delivering a number of benefits as a result of increased supply chain visibility and is expected to pay for itself within 10 months of the 'go-live' date.

• Drivers can now transfer delivery sign-off details back to the depot as they happen avoiding delays, lost paperwork and incorrect information arising from poor handwriting.
• Each scheduled delivery can now be checked and centrally stored within minutes of it taking place.
• Warehouse staff are spending less time preparing the pallet cages and associated paperwork for delivery.
• Deposit management is 100% accurate.
• Overwhelmingly positive feedback from drivers and stores.

Stephen Bennett Concludes

"The 90-day implementation really does say it all. WCS have been a superlative technology partner for this project, managing a complex cross-functional project, on-time, to budget. The project required the collaboration of multiple business departments including Finance, IT, Mobile, Logistics and the Depots."

"We are monitoring the cost savings associated with the multiple benefits we have achieved and the project is on -target to deliver a full ROI within 10 months of the 'go-live' date. We have also, importantly, achieved our goal of a future-proof, enterprise-wide mobility platform. The project represents a huge step change in our supply chain optimisation and provides many opportunities for further improvements."

For further information visit www.wwchainstores.com

WCS
Supply Chain Expertise. Delivered.