

How a Foodservice Distributor Improved Accuracy, Productivity, and Scalability with a Modern Warehouse Management System

1 Introduction

A leading foodservice equipment and supplies distributor with multiple distribution centers across the United States had built a strong reputation for delivering products to customers nationwide. As the business continued to grow, its legacy warehouse management system and inconsistent operating processes were limiting efficiency, scalability, and visibility across the distribution network. Recognizing the need to modernize its warehouse operations and establish a foundation for future growth, the company partnered with Alpine Supply Chain Solutions to guide its warehouse management system (WMS) transformation.

2 Challenges

The company's legacy AS/400-based WMS had reached the end of its useful life. The highly customized system lacked the scalability, intelligent location management, and slotting capabilities needed to improve warehouse efficiency or support future automation initiatives. Limited inventory visibility and inconsistent item master data further restricted reporting capabilities and operational decision-making.

Operational consistency was another major challenge. Each distribution center followed different warehouse processes and utilized varying levels of automation, making it difficult to standardize operations across the network.

3 Solutions

Minimal barcode usage and limited warehouse control system (WCS) integration forced employees to rely heavily on manual confirmations and tracking, increasing the potential for inventory and shipping errors. The complexity of the product catalog added another layer of difficulty. Thousands of SKUs with multiple units of measure and unique nesting configurations created challenges for receiving, storage, replenishment, and order fulfillment.

During the implementation of a new WMS, the project also encountered software defects, printing issues, and complexities related to customized functionality that delayed testing and deployment activities.



Alpine Supply Chain Solutions developed a structured implementation strategy to support the organization's WMS modernization initiative. The team established a comprehensive project governance framework that included detailed project schedules, recurring status meetings, and executive steering committee oversight to maintain alignment and accountability throughout the project.

Working alongside the client and software vendor, Alpine facilitated solution design workshops and developed future-state process maps that standardized warehouse operations while leveraging the capabilities of the new WMS across multiple distribution centers.

To ensure a successful deployment, Alpine created detailed functional designs and comprehensive System Integration Testing (SIT) and User Acceptance Testing (UAT) plans that validated both technical functionality and operational workflows. The team also developed a complete training strategy, including documentation and a train-the-trainer program, enabling internal staff to confidently support and manage the system after go-live.

4 Implementation

Alpine collaborated closely with the client and software provider throughout system configuration and implementation, documenting current-state operations and designing standardized future-state warehouse processes.

The team managed the execution of functional testing and user acceptance testing across all warehouse activities, validating system performance, process accuracy, and operational readiness prior to deployment. Comprehensive training materials, operational documentation, and end-user education equipped warehouse personnel with the knowledge and tools needed to successfully transition to the new WMS and assume ownership following implementation.



5 Results

The first distribution center achieved a successful go-live with minimal post-implementation issues, thanks to Alpine's structured project management, extensive testing, and comprehensive training approach. The project also established a standardized implementation methodology that can be replicated across future facilities, accelerating subsequent deployments while reducing project risk.

Within one week of go-live, the client's internal team had assumed full ownership of daily warehouse operations, including redesigned receiving, picking, put-wall processing, complex order management, and new warehouse equipment.

The modernization initiative is expected to deliver approximately \$3 million in annual labor savings beginning six months after each site implementation. Inventory location accuracy is projected to improve to more than 95%, while wrong-item shipments, overshipments, and short shipments are expected to decrease by 25%.

By combining disciplined project governance, comprehensive testing, and operational expertise, Alpine helped the organization successfully modernize its warehouse management system while creating a scalable operational foundation to support continued growth and future distribution center deployments.

