



Chilled & Frozen Goods: Top 6 WMS Business Benefits

Leading chilled and frozen goods distributor Castlecool outlines the key benefits achieved by implementing a Supply Chain Management solutions from Principal Systems.

1. Optimising Picking Efficiency

In Castlecool the initial 'Put Away' location of goods, as well as the picking of customer orders, is calculated by the system to ensure **optimal routing of the fork lift trucks**. Each truck has is equipped with a portable computer and the operator is guided by on-screen picking instructions.

"This makes a huge difference to efficiency and productivity," according to Castlecool Managing Director; Paul Sharrt, "Not only do the operators never have to retrace their steps, but when a number of forklifts are working in the same warehouse the most efficient coordination of their movements is worked out automatically by the system."

2. 100% Traceability

The fundamental challenge is to keep track of all the thousands of items received, stored and shipped through the company's various facilities.

"We could have up to 10,000 pallets in a single chamber, with an average of 50 cases per pallet," explains Paul Sharrt, "and that is multiplied by a number of different facilities and 24x7 stock movement."

Castlecool

Operating from a 63 acres (255,000 sq. metres) site, Castlecool distributes leading brands such as; Heinz, Unilever, Cargill, Kerry Group and Glanbia.

In operation since 1994, the company is run by Paul Short – a recent Chairman of the International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses.



Our food and pharmaceutical clients require 100% traceability while our own operations depend on the highest levels of efficiency for competitiveness." All this is possible with Principal's solutions.

3. 100% Pick accuracy

The 'pick face' is often the busiest part of the operation, as mixed orders are assembled for distribution. Managing the best mix of buffer stock, breaking pallets and cases and correctly assembling orders is an ongoing challenge.

"Using Principal's solutions to guide the operators has improved pick rates greatly over our previous manual system, in terms both of speed and also of accuracy - now at levels of 99.8% plus."

This high level of pick rate accuracy, Paul Shortt points out, is important in attaining the highest levels of customer service and satisfaction with minimal errors manifesting later in the supply chain, for example at retail delivery level.

4. Changing Business Rules

Any business rule required by a Castlecool client can be readily incorporated in the software algorithms at user level and then altered as required, for example; keeping like goods together, or fast-moving items near the loading bays, or indeed more sophisticated prioritization.

The system knows the appropriate locations, from five temperature zones to the dimensions and load strengths of racking systems. It can also, for example, minimize movement of mobile racking whether loading, or picking.

5. Bed & Breakfast Warehousing

"We can pick for tomorrow's production using our smart systems - integrated with the customer's production planning - delivering to tight windows and functioning as a unique Just in Time (JIT) solution for fresh/frozen food product manufacture."



Describing the service as 'bed and breakfast' warehousing, Paul Shortt points out that because the goods are at all times the property of the clients and on their systems the integrity of the traceability chain is assured.

6. Reduced Administration

The system is a fully electronic solution. "We have binned our four-part stationery sets, eliminated filing cabinets and saved about three full-time equivalents in administration," Paul Shortt says.

Data capture and exchange is all electronic, from Purchase Orders through logistics documentation including proof of delivery.

In the warehouse, both laptops and handheld devices are used by staff, connected by wireless to the main system so that pick lists can be pushed out to the individual operator, or any queries entered directly from the floor.

Although many thousands of items move through the Castlecood facilities every week, invoicing for that period takes just about an hour, as handling and storage costs are captured and allocated automatically by the system.



PRINCIPAL

Ireland

Tel: + 353 1 668 4450
56 Pembroke Road, Ballsbridge,
Dublin 4, Ireland.

Info@principal.ie

UK

Tel: +44 (0) 870 2405212
Pedmore Road, Brerley Hill,
West Midlands, DY5 1LJ, England.

Info@principalsystems.co.uk

www.principal.ie