

FOWLER WELCH ADVANCES LOGISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION

OPERATIONS

11 sites across the UK

MANHATTAN SOLUTION

Warehouse Management

FOWLER • WELCH



CHALLENGE

To drive continuous improvement in productivity and efficiency across the Fowler Welch warehouse network

SOLUTION

Manhattan's Warehouse Management solution for accuracy, traceability and customer visibility

PROGRESS & RESULT

The order fulfilment process is now streamlined, easily auditable, more efficient and faster

“Having an advanced Warehouse Management System in place is now an expectation, especially from the retailers, and Manhattan Associates is seen as an exemplary choice.”

MATTHEW DOWNES, IT DIRECTOR
FOWLER WELCH

STREAMLINED ORDER FULFILMENT

at Fowler Welch

CHILLED AND AMBIENT GOODS SPECIALIST DEVELOPS SYSTEMS TO EXPAND CAPABILITY AND ENHANCE CAPACITY AND EFFICIENCY

Fowler Welch is an award-winning distribution business offering warehousing, consolidation and distribution services for companies involved in the production and sales of chilled and ambient products. With headquarters in Spalding, Lincolnshire, Fowler Welch's operations are strategically located in key import, growing and production areas. Together with a growing number of regional hubs, located from Kent to Lancashire, and Tyne & Wear to Devon, Fowler Welch provides a comprehensive service to all corners of the UK. Additionally, Fowler Welch has a base in the Netherlands, providing a link between the UK and Mainland Europe.

Fowler Welch implemented Manhattan Associates' Warehouse Management System (WMS) three years ago and has recently completed a successful upgrade of the solution.

"One of the key reasons for originally installing the Manhattan WMS was to attain high levels of inventory accuracy. We now have that and it means we know exactly what we've received, what's been picked and what we've got left."

FOWLER WELCH NEEDED AN EFFICIENT ALTERNATIVE TO PAPER-BASED PROCESSES TO ADDRESS BUSINESS GROWTH

Fowler Welch is expanding its business, and has been successful in providing not just a chilled distribution service but a service for customers involved in the production and sales of ambient goods also.

In Fowler Welch's traditional chilled distribution business, extremely short production cycles are the norm and order accuracy and delivery promptness are assumed, so the business is used to dealing with very fast turnaround times. In a non-temperature controlled or ambient distribution operation, goods tend to move through the supply chain at a slower pace—however, one of Fowler Welch's aims is to bring the disciplines of the temperature-controlled business to the ambient sector.

Fowler Welch implemented the Manhattan Associates WMS at all of its depots where there is a picking, packing, consolidation and despatch operation. Products come in from varying manufacturers and are then shipped out to the retail clients' distribution centres or directly to their stores.

Prior to Manhattan, the growing picking operation was run through a legacy system which relied on a lot of paper-based picking without scanning or barcode labelling for managing the order fulfilment operation. Retailers' and manufacturers' requirements were developing in terms of compliant barcode labelling and advanced shipment notifications, meaning changes had to be made.

Fowler Welch continues to grow the business by increasing the volume of work via existing and new customers. The increase in work meant finding an alternative to a manual paper-oriented approach. Fowler Welch recognised that it needed to implement an advanced WMS. After looking at the marketplace, Manhattan Associates was identified as an industry-respected solution.

FOWLER WELCH INCREASES ORDER ACCURACY, PROVIDES VISIBILITY AND BOOSTS CUSTOMER SATISFACTION LEVELS

With Manhattan's Warehouse Management solution (WMS), Fowler Welch is able to track products as they enter the warehouse and scan and automate picking to speed up the overall order fulfilment process. This includes receiving products from a variety of manufacturers, which are barcode labelled for identification, and using the WMS to drive the process, Fowler Welch is able to immediately identify all stock by type, quantity and location.

Orders, typically from retailers, are fed into the Manhattan system which manages the flow of goods and ensures that orders are fulfilled accurately. Delivery information is automatically coordinated with Fowler Welch's Transport Management System.

Matthew Downes, IT director at Fowler Welch, commented, "One of the key reasons for originally installing the Manhattan WMS was to attain high levels of inventory accuracy. We now have that and it means we know exactly what we've received, what's been picked and what we've got left. With the system-generated Advance Shipment Notices (ASNs), we can also let customers know exactly when they're going to receive their goods. Accurate orders and transparency of the fulfilment process has really boosted customer satisfaction levels."

Downes continued, "In combination with our other systems, Manhattan Associates' WMS provides a lot of intelligence in terms of what our business looks like at any moment in time. The key for us is using that intelligence to improve the operation, allowing warehouse operators to do things in a more logical and efficient sequence, keep customers better informed, and fulfil orders accurately every time."

"Going forward, as we handle greater and greater volumes of ambient goods, as well as chilled, we know that with Manhattan Associates' solution, we will be able to apply the same functionality across all product groups despite their differing product characteristics and storage requirements," explained Downes. "We can be confident that we can consistently provide a great service for our clients."

