

An End-to-End Solution to Optimize Inbound and Outbound Operations

Crane Worldwide Logistics Success Story

How implementing Datex® Footprint® WMS enabled Crane Worldwide Logistics to meet the diverse and dynamic needs of its 3PL customers

ABOUT THE CLIENT


With more than 130 locations across 30 countries, Crane Worldwide Logistics is a leader in supply chain solutions, providing international third-party logistics (3PL) services—including managed transportation, trade advisory, and customs brokerage—and air, ground, and ocean freight services.

THE CHALLENGE

Crane Worldwide Logistics needed a scalable and flexible warehouse management software (WMS) that included advanced features such as customizable reporting, intelligent integrations with other systems, and 24/7 real-time data access through a customer-facing portal.

THE SOLUTION

Datex Footprint WMS, used in combination with Zebra mobile computing hardware, enabled Crane Worldwide Logistics to onboard new 3PL customers quicker, boost customer satisfaction rates through increased visibility, and improve labor productivity with state-of-the-art technology.



Interested in seeing how Footprint WMS's data accuracy can unlock new operational success in your warehouse?

[Preview Footprint WMS here.](#)

ABOUT CRANE WORLDWIDE LOGISTICS

Continuing a Legacy of Leadership in Logistics

Headquartered in Houston, Texas, [Crane Worldwide Logistics](#) (Crane) is a full-service air freight, ocean freight, trucking, supply chain solutions, customs brokerage, and transportation logistics company. Founded in 2008, Crane is a relationship-based organization that firmly believes in “the personal touch” with its customers.

Crane has more than 130 offices in 30 countries and provides services to a wide range of industries, including aerospace, automotive, energy, healthcare, high-tech, and industrial, as well as retail and trade shows.

Although transportation is the company’s primary specialty, Crane’s warehousing services are expanding worldwide. Crane also provides freight consolidation and deconsolidation services, cargo insurance, value-added services, and temperature-controlled transportation. With warehouses across the globe and annual sales in the billions, Crane continues to expand.

THE CHALLENGE

Lack of Critical 3PL Flexibility

With the existing system unable to keep pace with the company’s growth and increasingly complex customer demands, Crane needed a more robust, customizable supply chain software solution.

A number of deployment models and options were evaluated before selecting Datex Footprint WMS.

The original warehouse management software (WMS) presented significant challenges that inhibited the staff’s ability to onboard new clients and scale the business. The existing architecture featured individual environments for each customer account, which made adding new customers to the WMS problematic and cost-prohibitive in terms of implementation.

Additionally, the existing WMS lacked the flexibility necessary for 3PL operations. Crane must be able to accommodate the varying needs and requirements of different types of clients. The Crane team felt that implementing Datex Footprint WMS would provide them with the flexibility needed to run their operation.

“3PLs are not a one-size-fits-all type of business. Having the ability to quickly make changes to meet customer requirements helps our operations run much more efficiently. Before Datex, this was a problem we were always trying to solve.”

KEVIN MCKAY

Product Manager at Crane Worldwide Logistics

THE SOLUTION

Datex Footprint WMS and Zebra Mobile Computing Devices

Crane's flagship location in Houston, the site of the initial implementation, is a 75,000-square-foot warehouse with more than 1,000,000 units on hand at any given time.

This facility served one customer, received 100-200 lines per day, and had a picking volume of 300-400 lines per day. The customer expected a 24-hour turnover.

The major requirements of the new WMS included:

- Electronic data interchange (EDI) services
- Integration with the transportation management system (TMS)
- Integration with the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system and the automated storage and retrieval system (ASRS)
- A customer-facing web portal with 24/7 real-time data access and reporting
- The ability to configure picking in waves or by zones
- The ability to create receiving labels for products
- Activity tracking with user ID visibility, plus customizable email and alert notifications
- Master handling units so that all contents in the handling unit can be transferred at one time
- Exception management

- Customizable allocation rules, flexible receiving options, and purchase order management
- Location assignments
- Crossdocking without inventory rules

Crane also required radio frequency (RF) for receiving, putaway, transfer, picking, and cycle counting. It was also important that any selected mobile devices were able to scan 3D barcodes.

At the time of the WMS selection, Crane was not using any dedicated mobile computing devices—only laptop computers.

When selecting handheld computing devices, Crane found that the Zebra MC9090 and Zebra MC9190 models fit the bill.

With Zebra mobile computing devices, Crane workers can now quickly scan and capture serial numbers when customer barcodes are present.

Since implementing the integrated technology solution provided by Datex and Zebra, Crane has significantly improved its ability to track and trace thanks to real-time inventory visibility.

The company now uses designated mobile devices and streamlined processes to maximize efficiency and throughput. With experience in distributing and implementing warehouse hardware, Datex was able to match Crane with the ideal solution to support their operations.

THE SOLUTION

“Using Datex software and Zebra mobile devices helps us in tying off the physical processes to the systemic, closer to the actual point of action [...] Using the mobile devices with the software provides more real time visibility and gives us the opportunity to react more quickly.”

KEVIN MCKAY

Product Manager at Crane Worldwide Logistics

THE RESULTS

Faster Onboarding, Faster Revenue Collection

Crane found immediate value in purchasing both mobile computing hardware and warehouse management software from Datex. Acting as a turnkey vendor, Datex provisioned the Zebra mobile computing devices and handled the entire configuration. Datex can even remotely access and troubleshoot any issues that may arise with the mobile handheld devices to ensure maximum uptime for the Crane workforce.

An additional benefit of selecting Datex is its ability to provide a discounted rate, enabling Crane to buy smaller quantities of devices as warehouses are set up with the new WMS. Doing so eliminates the need for Crane to stockpile devices until needed, thereby avoiding a major capital expense.

The implementation’s outcomes? McKay reports that onboarding new 3PL customers is much more streamlined with Datex Footprint WMS.

Using the combination of Zebra mobile computing devices with Datex specialized warehousing software has improved workforce productivity and enabled Crane to be more responsive in meeting the dynamic needs of its supply chain clients. The ability to onboard new clients more quickly helps third-party logistics providers like Crane collect revenue faster.

As an example of labor savings, McKay explained that one operation originally involved processing 600 line items a day with a labor team of 25 warehouse workers. Now, with Footprint WMS and Zebra MC9190 devices, this operation takes only 10 hours to process with a team of 14 workers in eight-hour shifts—a savings of 88 labor hours.

The new Zebra and Datex technology provides WMS users with the tools needed to collect, reconcile, and post inventory counts by triggering physical inventory/cycle counting.

The ability to provide customized reports and automated alerts for status changes and other issues has yielded clear benefits.

THE RESULTS

Plus, using Datex Footprint WMS enabled Crane to handle serial number validation more effectively, flagging exceptions immediately for higher visibility and remediation.

- The Crane team felt that implementing Datex Footprint WMS would provide them with the flexibility needed to run (and continue to grow) their operation.

"We can modify reports with the reporting tool in the application to provide data quickly in the exact format that our different customers want to see [...] Between reporting and increased visibility, using the new Datex Footprint WMS has allowed us to identify inventory discrepancies and resolve them more quickly."

KEVIN MCKAY

Product Manager at Crane Worldwide Logistics

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- With warehouses across the globe and annual sales in the billions, Crane Worldwide Logistics (Crane) is in rapid growth mode.
- Crane's existing warehouse management software was unable to keep pace with the company's growth and increasingly complex customer demands, so Crane needed a more robust, customizable solution.
- Crane must be able to accommodate the varying needs and requirements of different types of clients, and implementing Datex Footprint WMS would provide the company with the flexibility needed to run its operation.
- Crane needed a new software equipped with a number of features, including, but not limited to: EDI services, seamless integrations with other applications, customer-facing data access, customizable reporting, activity tracking, and flexible receiving options.
- By purchasing both the necessary hardware (i.e., Zebra mobile computing devices) and warehouse management software from Datex, Crane streamlined the implementation process and minimized investment expense.
- In terms of the implementation's outcomes, product manager Kevin McKay reports that onboarding new 3PL customers is much more streamlined with the Footprint WMS integration, leading to faster revenue collection.
- McKay adds, "Using the mobile devices with the software provides more real time visibility and gives us the opportunity to react more quickly," demonstrating the new system's responsiveness to the dynamic needs of Crane's supply chain clients.
- Datex can even remotely access and troubleshoot any issues that may arise with the mobile handheld devices to ensure maximum uptime for the Crane workforce.