CONTENT PARTNERS

WMS 2025

BOOSTING OPERATIONS BEYOND THE WAREHOUSE

Offering productivity improvements beyond the physical structure, a warehouse management system can serve as the hub for technologies that increase supply chain efficiencies. Here are three leading providers that can enable your warehouse to meet current and future demands.

Warehouse management systems (WMS) are undergoing a seismic shift, evolving from mere transaction recorders to the indispensable brains of supply chain execution. WMS users not only count on the basic functionality within the warehouse but also require connectivity and visibility outside the four walls of the warehouse.

A modern WMS links multiple operations, such as transportation and labor management systems, warehouse automation, and financial and analytics activities. WMS providers help simplify the integration of these solutions and enhance information flow across the enterprise with easy-to-implement deployments and user-customizable features. In contrast, in the past, new capabilities may have required expensive custom IT development.

"The lines are blurring because it's too difficult for a customer to have to work with many different vendors, so it makes sense for them to do as much as they can through their WMS and its partners," says Smitha Raphael, chief product and delivery officer at Synergy Logistics, provider of the *SnapFulfil WMS*.

The WMS can become the control center as data from the full range of supply chain activities flows into the system, giving managers a big-picture view from a single pane of glass.

"They don't have to shift between different systems and can see everything they need in one place," says Bryan Batchelder, vice president of product for Datex, provider of *Footprint® WMS*.

As acquisition and integration costs decline, more warehouses are investing in automation systems with the WMS as the hub. A modern WMS with multi-agent artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities can serve as the orchestrator of multiple robotics and automation systems to enhance efficiency and reduce errors.

"The biggest impact of AI that I see from a warehouse operation perspective is the future growth in robotics," says Amit Levy, executive vice president of sales and strategy at Made4net.

As warehouse operators consider adding automation, it's critical for the WMS to be compatible with the installation timeline as well as the operating systems.

"The automation should be implemented at the same speed as the WMS so they can go forward without having a phased approach," Raphael says.

From optimizing labor to leveraging artificial intelligence, Datex's *Footprint® WMS* addresses market trends and customer needs.

GETTING READY FOR AI

With an AI-enabled WMS, warehouse managers can monitor labor productivity and throughput to identify bottlenecks that might threaten strict service-level agreements.

"You can see where a zone is struggling and where one might be performing well and shift people around for a real-time response," Batchelder says.

A company's current WMS may seem adequate until it's not. Many companies are locked into existing solutions that can't support new expectations for AI and automation integrations. To support growth and adoption of new technologies, a WMS must be scalable and adaptable.

"Technology is moving fast, and customers want more for less. You need to be able to address the whole AI journey, which is part of every company's roadmap today," Levy says. "Companies want to invest in technology for the next 20 years, and they want to make sure that whatever they do is there for the long run."

Here are exclusive insights from some leading WMS providers that offer solutions incorporating the latest advances to help drive efficiency and service innovations to meet ongoing supply chain challenges.

DATEX: ADAPTING TO TRANSFORMATIVE TRENDS

Datex's *Footprint® WMS* has been designed to tackle prominent industry trends, including the migration to cloud-native architecture, labor optimization amid workforce shortages, and the rapid integration of automation and robotics, along with the rising influence of artificial intelligence.

Datex has undertaken a fundamental shift from traditional, on-premise, and virtualized WMS solutions to a fully cloud-native approach built upon containerized microservices. By leveraging containers, the system now instantly scales resources up or down according to demand, discarding the old model of fixed CPU and memory allocations.

This flexibility ensures not only zero downtime for software deployments, including seamless rollbacks, but also enables warehouses to tailor their computing resources for peak or off-peak periods, reducing cost and complexity, notes Bryan Batchelder, vice president of product for Datex.

This modern architecture also tackles longstanding issues around system maintenance, user disruption, and the time-consuming nature of upgrades.

"Deploying new versions of our software can now happen with zero downtime, and our customers don't even notice," Batchelder says.

The platform's overlay system enables deep customization without isolating customers from ongoing updates, a crucial advantage for industries with stringent compliance standards.

A robust WMS helps address the persistent warehouse labor shortage, which is especially challenging for third-party logistics (3PL) providers, who must balance rising labor costs with the pressure for competitive rates.

To address this challenge, Datex has focused on building integration partnerships that bring labor optimization, forecasting, and management directly into its platform. Plus, the interface can be intentionally streamlined for rapid onboarding, slashing the training time for seasonal and temp workers to as little as 15-20 minutes.

By presenting only essential functions and eliminating unnecessary menu options, the system reduces cognitive load and error rates, allowing employees to be productive as quickly as possible after onboarding.

SUPPORTING SMBs

While automation once seemed attainable only by giants like Amazon, Datex enables small and midsize warehouses to implement cutting-edge robotics. Recent projects, such as an integration with Locus Robotics, emphasize the value of a WMS as the operational hub. The system can coordinate hundreds of autonomous robots based on real-time data, with robots checking in, confirming tasks, and making workflow decisions dynamically.

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From fresh produce to flat pack furniture to 3PL, our WMS has done it all.

Whatever you're moving, storing, or optimizing, our configurable and scalable WMS is ready to help make your supply chain unstoppable.

MADE4NET

"It's amazing to see 200 robots, directed in large part by our system, checking in with the WMS as they zoom around the warehouse autonomously," Batchelder says.

Datex's hybrid deployment model supports the adoption of warehouse automation. Cloud-based management for performance-critical elements—such as robotics control for high-speed conveyors—can be deployed on-premise. This approach ensures low latency even if internet connectivity wavers, overcoming a traditional barrier to robotics adoption in a cloud-first environment.

"For one automated sorting system, we had 400 milliseconds from the time a barcode is scanned to when the diverter needed to have a decision about which lane to send the package down," Batchelder says. "These high-speed robots can't wait for a decision from the cloud."

AI's impact within Datex is significant internally, with AI-driven software development speeding delivery timelines, and externally, with plans to augment warehouse operations. AI-driven features, such as fulfillment recommendations, proactive labor shift proposals, and multi-agent systems, help refine clients' business requirements, pointing toward a future where decision-making is increasingly data-driven and automated.

MADE4NET: DESIGNED FOR SUPPLY CHAIN INNOVATION

WMS systems are evolving to support the entire supply chain, from the yard to last-mile delivery. Basic functionality is a given, but adaptability and scalability are crucial for future growth as users want systems that can handle changes in business requirements, such as new products or shipping methods.

AI tools incorporated into WMS solutions, including chatbots, natural language communication, computer vision, real-time location systems, and intelligent agents, deliver capabilities that offer a higher level of service throughout the warehouse and beyond the four walls.

"AI is obviously becoming a big part of any technology, and we're seeing it incorporated across multiple areas to meet new business realities—from AI-powered optimization to increased demands for flexibility," says Amit Levy, executive vice president of sales and strategy.

AI-driven systems are already making an impact. Made4net helped a customer implement a computer vision system that detects errors before products ship out of the warehouse, significantly reducing labor hours spent on fixes and rework.

Warehouse automation systems are becoming increasingly prevalent, and an AI-empowered WMS helps drive the adoption of robotics and other devices. AI and automation together accelerate order fulfillment, streamline error reduction, and lower labor costs—crucial benefits as warehouses confront rising service expectations and tight labor markets, according to Levy.

A WMS serves as the hub between humans and robotics, allowing all elements in the warehouse to be more efficient. A robotic system doesn't function by itself—it must tie into the system that drives the work and optimization of each task.

"By incorporating automation with the manual work, it's an equation where one plus one equals three," Levy says. "That's the role of a WMS in an automated warehouse."

ENABLING OMNICHANNEL SPEED

Currently, many warehouse operations are hindered by legacy WMS platforms that weren't designed for today's omnichannel velocity or the integration of advanced technologies. Modern WMS solutions are designed to be flexible and adaptable, supporting strategic growth and adapting with built-in or easily developed integrations with other standard software.

For example, when a new customer is onboarded into a 3PL warehouse or a customer starts shipping to Amazon fulfillment, the WMS may need to be configured accordingly.

"Look for the flexibility and adaptability of the system to enable those changes; that's a very key component for selecting a WMS," Levy says.

Cloud deployment is another surging trend, but on-premise and hybrid models still play an essential role, especially where connectivity or latency is a concern. A hybrid model blends cloud and on-premise resources to minimize latency in support of automation and provides redundancy in case of disruptions.

"Most of our customers are still going into the cloud, but those in countries

Offering flexibility and scalability, Made4net's *SCExpert*™ is an all-in-one platform for warehouse, transportation, yard, and labor management—available in the cloud or on premise.

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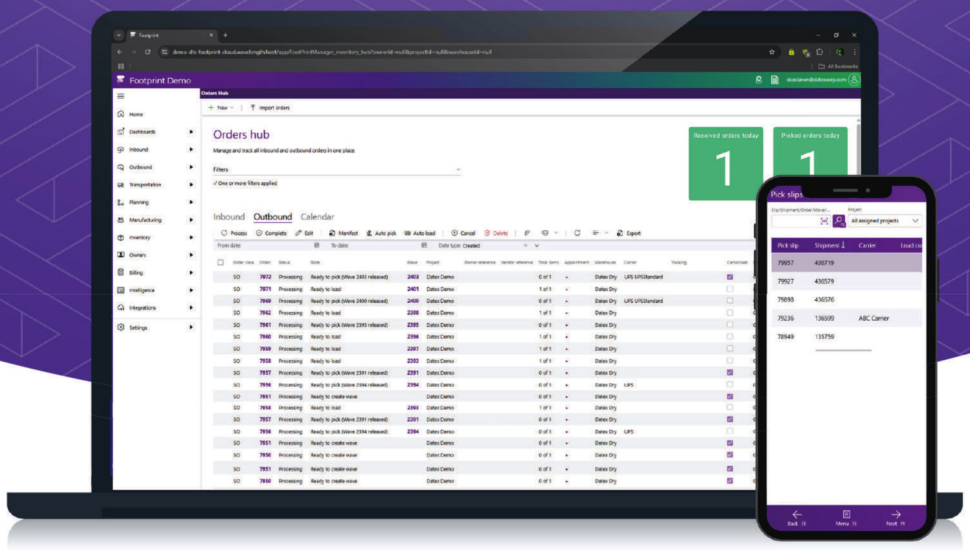

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where connectivity is more of an issue go on-premise," Levy says.

Made4net's *WarehouseExpert* was developed as a low/no-code environment so users can manage their own configuration without expensive IT development from the provider or a third-party consultant. "Users no longer need advanced programming skills to reconfigure workflows or create reports," Levy says. "They have the tools to do it on their own without impacting the core WMS product."

SNAPFULFIL: CONNECTING BEYOND THE WALLS OF THE WAREHOUSE

While a WMS is the backbone of warehouse operations, it serves as a hub connecting with other management solutions, carriers, and more.

"Many users don't just look for functionality within the WMS but also want to connect outside the four walls of the warehouse," says Smitha Raphael, chief product and delivery officer at Synergy Logistics, provider of the *SnapFulfil WMS*.

As a cloud-based solution, *SnapFulfil WMS* boasts a wide range of integrations and automations that don't require additional IT investments and can be turned on and off as needed. It connects with leading ERPs such as NetSuite as well as popular transportation management systems, ecommerce platforms, and carriers. The *SnapControl* multi-agent orchestration product enables device-agnostic automation through various messaging protocols.

"Users get the benefits of rate shopping, LTL integrations, and other functions without having to invest in IT or development resources from their side," Raphael says. "We've been strategic about what we bring into the product and what partners we bring in."

All of the built-in capabilities enable *SnapFulfil WMS* to be implemented quickly, often within 60 days, compared to months or years for other options.

"With *SnapControl*, the WMS and automations can go live on the same time scale, so there's no delay," Raphael says.

The built-in integrations can be turned on with the customer's account information if a customer adds a carrier or expands into new markets. There's no need to hire third-party integrators to connect the systems.

The foundation of *SnapFulfil WMS* is a rules engine that customers can configure themselves for maximum flexibility, eliminating the need for custom development. For example, the user can apply an existing rule to a short-term promotion to automatically move high-velocity items to a forward pick location or print a custom label.

"Users can change rules on the fly with no downtime, so they have the flexibility to set up different sites or products with unique rules," Raphael says. "All of that happens automatically, and just being able to control their own destiny is huge for them."

SUPPORTING WORKFLOWS

Third-party logistics providers can use the rules templates to add customers and set up workflows automatically. The 3PL's customers can access a portal to review performance metrics at any time. The systems reduce labor costs by automatically positioning inventory for efficient outbound picking and fulfillment. High-volume shipments from subscription services can be easily handled with automated rules managing repetitive tasks.

Real-time inventory visibility is critical, and *SnapFulfil* supports real-time cycle counts without freezing stock, so receiving and fulfillment continue with real-time adjustments to the count. Products are tracked from the shelf to the picking tote, eliminating the need to wait for updates to allocate inventory, even across multi-channel systems.

As supply chains become more complex, WMS users seek solutions that integrate seamlessly with transportation and labor management solutions as well as warehouse automation systems that extend visibility beyond the warehouse without significant IT development requirements.

"The lines between these systems will continue to blur because there is too much complexity for a customer to deal with all the different kinds of vendors," Raphael says. "It makes sense for them to look to their WMS provider to see how much can be done with built-in integrations." ■

WMS Leaders

Datex | www.datexcorp.com/wms-solutions
Datex engineered *Footprint® WMS* from the ground up with simplicity and flexibility ingrained for faster speed to revenue and more productive and reliable operations. The warehouse management system's flexibility ensures not only zero downtime for software deployments, including seamless rollbacks, but also enables warehouses to tailor their computing resources for peak or off-peak periods, reducing cost and complexity.

Made4net | made4net.com
Made4net provides a full suite of supply chain execution solutions and best-in-class WMS software for companies of all sizes. Its fully integrated, end-to-end supply chain solutions encompass WMS, 3PL, yard, labor, routing, and proof-of-delivery capabilities. Its *SCExpert™* platform enables supply chain convergence.

SnapFulfil | snapfulfil.com/about-snapfulfil
A cloud-based, Tier 1 warehouse management system with flexibility at its core, *SnapFulfil* delivers cutting-edge technology at a fraction of the cost of traditional installations. The warehouse management system is quick and easy to implement, giving companies a rapid return on investment. *SnapFulfil* is highly configurable and can adapt to meet evolving fulfillment demands.

SNAPFULFIL™

Powerful Rules-Based **Configuration Engine**

SnapFulfil is a cloud-based, **Tier 1 warehouse management system** with flexibility at its core.

It delivers cutting edge technology at a fraction of the cost of traditional installations and, unlike other warehouse management systems, is quick and easy to implement, giving you a rapid return on investment.

Once up and running SnapFulfil is highly configurable and can adapt to meet evolving fulfilment demands.

- Highly configurable
- Rapid deployment in 45 days or less
- Affordable with capex & leasing options
- Service level & peak demand management
- Pay for extra users only when you need them
- Can be up and running in minutes
- Fully scalable & flexible solution
- Increased picking & shipping accuracy

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