



Cold storage – hot voice picking

Voxware's configuration tools helped us achieve our goals without having to change our entire infrastructure.

Todd Kauppila
Controller
Pierre's Ice Cream
Artificially Flavored
Vanilla Ice Cream
with Chocolate Wafers
12-3.5 fl oz Sandwiches—(42 fl oz)/12-103 mL Sandwiches—(1.24 L)



By the Numbers

5

weeks from start to go-live

99.96

% accuracy level

-20°

Fahrenheit in the DC

Quick Facts

Objectives

- Increase Accuracy
- Increase Productivity
- Reduce Training Time

Solution

- Voxware 3 Voice Picking
- Dynamic notification of empty locations
- Automatic routing of workers to ensure order completion
- LXE HX3 Voice Only Wearable Mobile Computers
- Speaker Dependent Voice Recognizer for Harsh Environments

Business Value

- 99.96% Accuracy
- Reduction of seasonal hires
- Dramatic reduction in cost of error handling
- Faster time-to-standard for new hires

Pierre's Ice Cream is known for premium quality and an intense dedication to customer service. These characteristics shine through in the company's distribution operation as well as in its product. That is why Pierre's turned to Voxware voice picking.

"We saw an opportunity to improve our service levels, which were already very high," said Todd Kauppila, Controller. "By implementing Voxware, we've not only increased accuracy to near-perfect levels, we've also realized substantial cost savings in our daily operation."

The Voxware implementation was very fast, taking just five weeks from start to finish. Behind the rapid deployment were two Voxware toolsets: VoxStudio, which enabled the Pierre's voice picking workflow to be configured rather than coded, and VoxConnect, which quickly established an interface to Pierre's WMS.

"Our main goal was to go from a great operation to an outstanding operation. We didn't want to be forced to rebuild our infrastructure or upgrade our WMS. Voxware's configuration capabilities enabled us to get what we needed without a big disruption," said Kauppila. "We got our team working hands-free with a very reasonable effort, and haven't looked back."

The environment in the Pierre's Ice Cream DC is fairly challenging: temperatures at -20° Fahrenheit mean that team members have to wear protective clothing in order to work. The Voxware system has boosted productivity so much that picking ends much earlier on a daily basis, and seasonal hires have been reduced.

Before Voxware, orders were sometimes incomplete because team members would skip

empty locations and not be able to return to them later to complete the orders. Now, when a pick location is empty, the Voxware system sends a message, a replenishment task is dynamically initiated, and workers are automatically redirected to the pick location at the end of an assignment to pick products which originally were short.

Voxware has also reduced the cost of rectifying pick errors. Fiercely dedicated to service, Pierre's will make special trips out to customer locations when delivery errors are reported. This makes for very happy customers, but can cost as much as \$200 every time an error occurs. With Voxware, errors are now almost non-existent, with only a handful reported in an entire year.

Prior to putting in Voxware, paper pick lists were hindering the workers. "It was slow, there were errors, plus we had to factor in the cost of paper and printers," explained Dave Cillian, Operations Manager. A voice only wearable unit from LXE now speeds up workers, who don't have to bother with buttons on the unit, which would be difficult while wearing two layers of gloves.

Training time was dramatically reduced with Voxware. Previously, workers would need to learn all of the abbreviated and encrypted product codes. This would typically take 7-15 days before the new worker was reaching efficiency standards. Now with voice picking, it is 4 hours or less.

"At the end of the day, it's all about making a premium product and delivering it safely and reliably," said Kauppila. "Our customers count on us for accuracy. With Voxware, we've found a way to improve our service levels while actually reducing operating costs. That's a pretty compelling value proposition."