Using the Cloud to keep up with growth

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Shawn McGhee,
President
Hollywood Feed

By the Numbers

50%	33%	11
yearly growth	productivity increase	days for full implementation

Quick Facts

Objectives

- Continue cost competitiveness
- Increase productivity
- Limit staffing increase despite large expansion of warehouse space
- Scale system with business growth without enterprise purchases

Solution

- Voxware VMS Cloud order picking software
- HX3 voice-only wearable computers from Honeywell

Business Value

- ROI achieved under 60 days
- Productivity increase from 180 lines/hour to 300 lines/hour
- Decreased training time
- Zero staff additions despite 113% warehouse space increase
- Real-time warehouse reporting without WMS

Memphis-based Hollywood Feed can trace their roots back to the 1950's, but as recently as 2007, it had only three locations. Since then, Shawn McGhee purchased the company and took control as President, aiming to grow Hollywood Feed so that it becomes the "Whole Foods of the pet industry," offering unique brands of unprocessed food for canine and feline pets, as well as ancillary services such as grooming, training and proper pet nutrition.

Today, Hollywood Feed has expanded to 20 stores at 50% yearly growth with plans to build 12 new stores in the next year. In order to support these growth initiatives, McGhee knew that improving the efficiency and accuracy of their warehouse operations was paramount.

Managing High Growth Rates

Operating distribution out of a 36,000 sq. ft. conventional warehouse, Hollywood Feed filled orders for 30-50 lbs. bags of pet food using a paper-based picking process. With a small workforce devoted to product selection, the existing picking process did not allow workers to reach maximum levels of productivity or efficiency and left room for inaccuracies in product selection. Knowing their warehouse processes and operations were not optimized to support fast-pace growth - and to accommodate an impending increase in warehouse size to 77,000 sq. ft - Hollywood Feed turned to voice technology to increase productivity, efficiency, and accuracy.

"We began investigating voice because it offered a hands-free solution that would best meet our needs. However, we quickly found that few suppliers wanted to talk to us unless we were spending $250,000 or more," said McGhee.

"Yet when we spoke with Voxware they offered subscription-based pricing which provided the level of flexibility we needed to bring voice into our business. In addition, their Cloud-based Voice Management Suite was far more intuitive than any other solution we investigated."

Gaining Business and Operational Benefits with Cloud-Based Voice

Hollywood Feed was excited by the prospect of using an alternative to an on-premise solution to take their operations to the next level. They decided to deploy Voxware's high-end cloud-based voice software solution, Cloud Voice Management Suite (Cloud VMS). They had the solution up and running in just 11 days without the help of dedicated IT resources, with 50% of the workforce up and running in two days on-site.

Well versed in the often painful software implementation process, McGhee was surprised by how easy it was to install and use Cloud VMS. "Quite frankly, this is the single easiest technology I have ever implemented," McGhee said. "I've had Windows implementations that took longer than this did."

Hollywood Feed has realized many positive results including decreased worker training time, worker efficiency improved by a third, increased accurate order selection, and achieved a return on investment in less than 60 days. With continued growth in their sites, Hollywood Feed plans to scale Cloud VMS to accommodate more workers, increased order demands, and to ensure their customer base remains loyal and satisfied.