PEAK-RYZEX™

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RETAIL

It's a Stroll for Shoe Zone

Shoe Zone

Industry

Retail

Business Challenge

- Enhance existing systems
- Managing online orders
- Introduction of a high-performance WMS system

Solution

- High-performance WMS system – which handles online order fulfilment
- Data collection system

Featured Products

- 200 Zebra hands-free wearable computers
- 200 Zebra wearable ring scanners for hands-free scanning
- Zebra QL 320 mobile printers for handheld computers

Key Benefits

- **Track and trace:** Every time a bar code is scanned, the system is immediately updated.
- **Integrated system:** The WMS supports online order fulfillment for customers as well as supplying stores with stock.

About the Company

Shoe Zone is a footwear retailer with 800 locations throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland. Shoe Zone sells around 30 million pairs of footwear annually, and in excess of 5,700 people are employed throughout the company. It's a stroll for Shoe Zone to pick up to 750,000 pairs of shoes a week for its online customers and retail stores with Peak-Ryzex's* advanced Warehouse Management System (WMS).

Business Challenge

An expanding business

Shoe Zone is one of the UK's fastest-growing footwear retailers, and its expansion gathered pace with the acquisitions of Shoefayre and Stead & Simpson; its retail estate now spans 800 stores.

Commenting on the logistics implications of this growth, Nigel Humphries, Head of IT, Shoe Zone, says, "Consolidation of goods storage and distribution in one warehouse required that we review and enhance our WMS to achieve high throughput. The system needed to support picking for our individual Stead & Simpson and Shoe Zone brands; optimize warehouse space; provide complete control and visibility over stock management and logistics processes; and fulfill online orders."

With Shoe Zone's business expanding rapidly and the introduction of web-based orders, the company identified the need to enhance its existing systems for warehouse operations with a high-performance WMS. As well as ensuring that stores receive required stock, Shoe Zone also required the new system to manage orders received online from customers.

With these requirements in mind, Shoe Zone selected to work with enterprise mobility technology specialist Peak-Ryzex.

Solution

Peak-Ryzex has developed an advanced, comprehensive WMS that consolidates fulfillment of orders for online customers and Shoe Zone's stores. With the use of wearable computers and scanners from Zebra to collect data, the system enables goods to be tracked from the moment they arrive at goods-in to storage, picking, palletization and shipment providing real-time visibility over stock levels. During daily pick cycles, teams are provided, via their mobile computer, with a list of goods to pick, where they're located and the quantity required. The system also coordinates stocktaking. It manages the return of goods from stores and the redistribution of these to sites that are likely to sell them faster.

"We have 800 shoe stores across the UK and also sell direct to customers online. Our logistics operation must run very efficiently, with our teams picking up to 750,000 pairs of shoes – across 848 pick cycles – each week to meet order requirements. M-Netics' WMS plays a key part in helping us achieve this level of performance. It tracks and traces goods for complete real-time visibility over our warehouse operation, ensures accurate replenishment, enables high-volume picking and provides highly accurate order fulfillment with exceptions running at less than 0.1 percent."

— **Steve Orr, Distribution Director, Shoe Zone**

Contact Us

Contact a retail specialist today.

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Peak-Ryzex
Listening, learning and delivering

The decision to work with Peak-Ryzex was based on several factors. Humphries mentioned, "The Peak-Ryzex team listened closely to our requirements and clearly understood our business objectives, recommending the development of an advanced WMS tailored to our exact requirements. This really appealed to us because many of the options we reviewed were inflexible and required us to shoehorn our requirements into vendors' products. Peak-Ryzex also responded quickly to any requests to amend the system. And with its experience across hardware, application development, and integration – the core elements of this deployment – we gave the team the green light to build a WMS that consolidates fulfillment of direct online orders from customers and the stock requirements of stores."

Complete system

With the hardware, Peak-Ryzex advised Shoe Zone to equip staff with Zebra's wearable computers and ring scanners, as Stephen Godman, Sales Director, Peak-Ryzex, explains:

"The devices must address three simple expectations. First, the scanner must be accurate and fast to use. Second, it has to be comfortable to wear and allow users to work efficiently with their hands free. Third, it should provide rugged, reliable operation. In our view, Zebra devices best deliver against these demands."

Applications

The devices that use the standard Windows CE operating system are empowered by a range of applications written using Peak-Ryzex's robust Meteor platform. Meteor is designed to manage large volumes of simultaneous transactions and provide robust, continuous performance.

The applications interface with Shoe Zone's ERP system (using standard text and CSV files) and support a wide range of activities. Core tasks include order fulfillment for online customers, tracking and tracing stock, goods picking and stocktaking.

Applications

- **Directed replenishment:** The WMS automatically directs operators to replenish the pick face from bulk stock according to the forthcoming pick schedule.

- **Directed picking:** Devices inform pickers which products to pick and where to find them.

- **Prioritized picking:** Picking for 850 weekly deliveries is prioritized by vehicle schedules.

- **Box labeling:** When a box is filled, the picker prints a label with the store name, store code and the order manifest, using the label to seal the box.

- **Order check:** Boxes are scanned at dispatch to verify they are being placed on the right vehicle.

- **Stock counting:** The WMS permits scanners to be used for stock counting at individual bay level as well as for the annual stock count.

Fulfillment of online orders

Typically, in warehouse operations, online order management and store replenishment are overseen by two different systems. This increases operating costs by replicating deployment and maintenance – Peak-Ryzex's WMS reduces mistakes by managing orders for both online customers and stores.

Online orders are integrated into pick cycles with teams taking the goods to a post-picking area. Here the order manifest is scanned and the Zebra printers provide the shipping label, invoice and return label to be packed with the product. The order is passed to a separate team that sends the goods on to the customer.

"It makes life much easier to consolidate on and offline requirements in the one WMS, and ensures we have complete and accurate real-time visibility over our stock situation," says Humphries.

Goods tracking and tracing

Goods are tracked and traced across warehouse processes from goods-in to storage, picking, packing, palletization and finally distribution. Goods are scanned when they are picked, with the Peak-Ryzex WMS automatically updated for accurate replenishment planning. It also identifies when teams should be diverted to complete a pressing order flagged by the WMS. For instance, Shoe Zone has stores in Ireland and vehicles for these outlets need to be ready to leave at a certain time to make the ferry.

Picking support

With the picking, manifests are sent to users' wearable computers each day with clear instructions of the quantity of goods to pick and where to find them. When a shipment box is full, the team member prints a label using their mobile Zebra printer with the store name, store code and the order details, using the label to seal the box. "One of the great assets of the system is its efficiency. The hardware ensures teams work with their hands free and receive highly accurate orders and instructions," says Humphries.

Stocktaking

As well as supporting tracking and tracing of goods, the scanners are used to efficiently complete Shoe Zone's major annual stocktake – adding further productivity gains to the system's business advantages.

"We are very pleased with the comprehensive WMS built by Peak-Ryzex. They delivered the solution quickly and connected it seamlessly to our business systems. The technology has proved to be extremely reliable; it manages thousands of simultaneous data transactions day in, day out in a paperless environment. We have complete visibility over our warehouse operation, our teams pick quickly and efficiently, replenishment planning is improved, the system supports offline and online sales, and we have peace of mind that orders are accurate. In fact, all key requirements of an effective business critical warehouse picking system are delivered by the technology."

— **Nigel Humphries, Shoe Zone**

Benefits and Results

Efficiency, accuracy and productivity

The WMS is the cornerstone of a highly efficient logistics operation that distributes up to 750,000 pairs of shoes weekly, encompassing orders for online sales and Shoe Zone's stores. The collection of real-time data from across warehouse processes ensures accurate replenishment. The system provides picking teams with clear instructions of orders required, the stock location and shipment priority. It also enables Shoe Zone to increase sales by managing the recall of goods from stores and shipping these to sites that are more likely to move the stock. The electronic processes reduce administration and improve accuracy – shipments to stores are 99.9 percent correct.

- **High throughput:** Teams manage huge demand – processing up to 750,000 pairs of shoes during 848 weekly picks.

- **Accuracy:** Stores receive the goods they need on time; order exceptions are less than 0.1 percent

- **Real-time data:** Real-time data provides visibility of performance and ensures replenishment keeps pace with store demands.

- **Improved sales:** The WMS enables the efficient management of returns, so that goods are sent back to the warehouse and shipped on to stores that are likely to sell the stock faster.

- **WMS:** Enabling the efficient management of returns, goods are sent back to the warehouse and shipped on to stores that are likely to sell the stock faster.

- **100 percent availability of stock:** Stock is always replenished in the warehouse in line with the requirements of the picking schedule.

- **Reduced administration:** The paperless system reduces administration and the scope for data error.