

The Supply Chain Maze

SUPPLY CHAIN SYSTEMS HELP RETAILERS NAVIGATE TWISTS AND TURNS

BY KEVIN O'ROURKE

» **RETAIL SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT IS A DIFFICULT MAZE. RETAILERS MUST FIND** the perfect route to get product from the right vendors to the right customers, while minimizing inventory levels, warehousing and transportation costs. In addition, retailers must walk the thin line of having enough merchandise to avoid stock outs, while keeping inventories

low enough to minimize carrying costs and respond to ever changing consumer demands.

Still other challenges are unique to e-commerce. Both "pure play" and multi-channel retailers are finding their first-generation platforms inadequate to the tasks of integrating increasingly complex supply chain and fulfillment functions.

An array of supply chain technology can help. Software offers streamlined processes to increase visibility, amp up delivery speeds and improve communications with suppliers. Supply chain hardware ranges from scanners to tag printers to RFID readers.

Better Collaboration

Enabling the sharing of key data and information between the retailer, suppliers and trading partners.

Better Visibility

Providing real-time detailed knowledge throughout every phase of the product design, development and manufacturing process.

ecVision XpressCommerce® is an award-winning Product Lifecycle Execution™ (PLE™) software solution that combines the key functions found in both Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) and Supply Chain Execution (SCE) systems.

XpressCommerce enables retailers to be more flexible to constantly changing consumer trends, increase profit margins, improve productivity of their global supply network, and quickly deliver quality items to their customers.

ecVision®
Experts in Collaboration and Visibility

www.ecVision.com



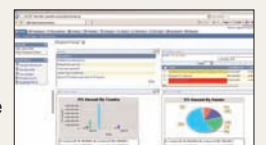
G.O.L.D. Vocal

MOBILE VOICE-DIRECTED LOGISTICS

G.O.L.D. Vocal, the voice-directed logistics platform from Aldata is now available in a PDA environment. The PDA extension permits a wider choice of operator terminals and expands the creation potential of new business processes based on multi-modal applications integrating voice, keyboard, barcode reader, RFID reader and voice data management methods. G.O.L.D. Vocal is primarily used in warehouses for picking preparation, splitting preparation (distribution and cross-docking) and picking inventory.

FOCUS ON ADMINISTRATIVE FEATURES

XpressCommerce 8.5 from ecVision is a comprehensive product lifecycle execution (PLE)



XpressCommerce 8.5

system combining the key functions of product lifecycle management (PLM) and supply chain execution (SCE) in a single system. Recent enhancements include: real-time visibility reporting via dashboard reports and scoreboards; interface personalization; internationalization (i18n) support; and capabilities to perform batch updates on templates, schedules and fields.

Noisy RFID

Intermec's IF30 network RFID reader features a dense reader mode which enables retailers to expand their RFID systems in noisy environments – multiple dock doors in close proximity. The IF30 reads tags at conveyor speeds of up to 1,600 feet per minute and from distances of up to 15 feet. In addition, the IF30 reader features increased receive sensitivity which allows it to interrogate weak tags, reducing the need for exceptions handling. The multi-protocol reader has a built-in power supply and powered general purpose input/output (GPIO) circuitry for direct monitoring of peripherals, like presence detectors and signal lights, and is powered by Intermec's IM5 radio module, which is EPCglobal Certified Compliant and Interoperable. **RIS**



IF30 RFID reader