

# FIVE STEPS

## TO SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT YOUR WMS

These five steps can make your Warehouse Management System implementation a success.

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Researching, selecting, implementing and supporting your Warehouse Management System is no small task. With everything that is involved, it's easy to skip a step or make a wrong choice that will have you retracing your steps, wondering where the whole thing went wrong. Instead of second-guessing your decision later, take a look at these 5 ways to help your WMS implementation be a success:

### STEP 1: UNDERSTAND YOUR REQUIREMENTS

Develop a detailed map of your current business processes. Process flow diagrams are an excellent tool for understanding operations. Make sure that the WMS can satisfy those business processes. Be open to using existing WMS functions and features that satisfy your business process needs, even if the steps in your process have to change. Remember, it's the end results that matter: meeting customer service requirements, achieving productivity targets while maintaining high levels of inventory accuracy.

### STEP 2: MINIMIZE SOFTWARE MODIFICATION

'No modifications' should be your mantra. Today's highly configurable WMS will suit most business requirements.

Be prepared to look at changes in your current steps in order to achieve your business goals using existing WMS functionality.

Software modifications are significant contributors to failed projects due to software bugs, upgrade problems, and the negative effects on project schedules and costs.

### STEP 3: DEVELOP A DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION, STARTUP AND TRANSITION PLAN

Plan to succeed and follow your plan. An old philosopher said, "If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there." This is especially true with WMS implementations. There are a large number of details that must be planned and managed. Spend the time up front to define a detailed plan, then manage your project through the plan, and don't short change the time allotted to training.

### STEP 4: TEST YOUR CONFIGURATION

After determining which WMS features you will implement, you will spend a significant amount of time entering parameters and configuration data. Test your business processes using test scenarios. Verify that your training material is accurate. Resolve all configuration processes prior to system startup and transition. Starting up and testing with a small set of items or a piece of your business can be very helpful.

### STEP 5: TRAIN EFFECTIVELY

Spend the time to develop training material and then train your users. If you only do on-the-job training and do not have a formal training program, you'll be sorry. People come and go over time; this is another area where a formal repeatable training program pays off.

These five steps are not designed to give you a 100% guarantee that your WMS implementation will be a success. They are to provide you with the methodology and the tools to help you define your WMS needs, evaluate and select the proper WMS for your needs, and facilitate the implementation process to make your WMS implementation experience successful.

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