



CASE STUDY

Endries improves warehouse processes and worker productivity with Infor WMS

Endries International began as a family-owned fastener distributor in Northeastern Wisconsin, more than 50 years ago. Since the company's beginnings, it's worked with OEMs, building its business around supporting manufacturers. Today, Endries manages over 500,000 SKUs, including various fasteners and related production components. Endries's sourcing and supply program throughout North America, Europe, and Asia, coupled with its fulfillment solutions, are designed to allow customers of every size to succeed.



Headquarters

Wisconsin, USA

SKUs

500,000

Warehouses

10

Industry

Distribution

Infor products

Infor® WMS

Infor Distribution SX.e

Infor OS

Website

endries.com

“ We outgrew our current warehouse management solution. After evaluating several best-of-breed solutions, we knew that Infor WMS was the right solution to address our complex requirements and changing needs, implement industry best practices, and provide transparency across the organization.”

TODD FISCHER

CIO, Endries International, Inc.

Endries is hyper-focused on not just anticipating and fulfilling its customers' needs, but also on consistently exceeding their expectations. To do this, Endries has configured its warehouses with many rows of custom inventory dedicated and allocated to specific customers. This type of configuration, however, caused challenges with how Endries managed its inventory and processes, resulting in the company developing many modifications to its ERP and warehouse management system (WMS) solutions over the years.

Unfortunately, these modifications represented a sizeable obstacle to software upgrades, as well as Endries's ability to adopt newer technologies. As the company continued to experience strong business expansion, the senior management team realized Endries had outgrown its current WMS and began evaluating if there was a better fit for its current needs and evolving business model. After conducting a search among best-of-breed WMS solutions, Endries ultimately invested in Infor WMS, which is powered by AWS.

One of the best aspects of working with Infor, according to Todd Fischer, CIO at Endries, was access to Infor's supply chain solution experts who provided assistance before, during, and after the implementation. Fischer states that Endries was able to remove about 99% of its software modifications and transition to accepted industry best practices, which are supported by Infor WMS. Some of the resulting changes included restructuring the company's receiving and operations processes.

“The Infor Services and Supply Chain Management teams were exceptional. They helped us remove 99% of our modifications and configure the solution to address our unique needs, while following best practices to ensure streamlined, effective, repeatable, and measurable processes. The implementation completed on-time, on-budget, and established a framework for success—today and into the future.”

TODD FISCHER
CIO, Endries International, Inc.

Business challenges

- Streamline putaway and picking processes
- Better manage unique customer inventory
- Eliminate modifications to stay current on software releases
- Attract and retain skilled labor

The Infor team worked side-by-side with Endries to help evaluate and streamline processes. Infor WMS supports complex requirements, is highly configurable, and was instrumental in eliminating virtually all modifications. As such, Endries gained the ability to stay current on software releases, take advantage of new enhancements, and focus on strategic initiatives (instead of managing and maintaining modifications). Endries's warehouse managers were excited to work with Infor WMS and recognized its potential to provide the company with greater transparency.

Working with supply chain experts at Infor allowed Endries to make the most of the solution's available options. Fischer indicated that the Infor team took the time to truly understand Endries's unique situation and ensure that the solution was configured to seamlessly meet the company's requirements.

What makes Endries's business model so unique is that approximately 70% of its products are unique to specific customers. While many distributors typically organize their warehouses by product, Endries tends to organize its locations by customer. Infor WMS could easily accommodate entire rows or zones dedicated to a specific customer, while helping to streamline inventory movement.

One of the resulting challenges was configuring picking and putaway logic to account for this unique scenario. Fischer shared an example: "If one of those customers returns a product, or we opt to buy it back, we need to track it coming into the warehouse and ensure it's inspected; and if it's ok, put it back on the shelf for that particular customer." Infor WMS also helped Endries optimize traffic through the warehouse so that employees can perform a cycle count while they're near a particularly fast-moving item.

Endries implemented the solution in just one warehouse initially in order to iron out the new processes before rolling it out across its other warehouses. This helped reduce potential interruptions and unexpected challenges. Fischer shared an interesting perspective that's valuable for nearly all distributors to consider: During the planning and execution phase of the implementations, Fischer emphasized that even if a warehouse is smaller, that doesn't mean that the project will be less complex.

Sometimes, in fact, smaller warehouses can be even more complex. For instance, one of Endries smaller (20,000-square-foot) warehouses stored over 25,000 small parts. According to Fischer: "Space usage and efficiency are even more important when you're in a more confined space. Working closely with Infor supply chain experts really helped us make the most of our investment in Infor WMS".

Another benefit to investing in a modern WMS solution is the degree to which it can promote productivity across the workforce. During the rollout of Infor WMS and subsequent enhancements, Endries was able to eliminate its third shift and improve worker productivity from five lines-per-hour to seven lines-per-hour. The company expects this to ultimately reach 10 lines per hour—resulting in a full doubling of worker output.

Endries is also looking to employ a higher-skilled, higher-paid workforce, which in turn should help with retention and reduce turnover. Endries is struggling with high warehouse employee turnover, which is costly in both the short- and long-term. By analyzing labor data from the labor management functionality within Infor WMS, the company will be better able to correctly compensate workers based on productivity. In addition, by leveraging Infor WMS's automation capabilities, Endries will be able to hire fewer, more skilled workers and pay them a more competitive wage.

Business results

- Removed 99% of software modifications
- Eliminated the need for a third shift
- Increased productivity from five lines-per-hour to seven lines-per-hour

During Endries's transformation from a heavily modified implementation to one that relies primarily on best practices, the company uncovered many opportunities to restructure and fine-tune its processes. And this continues to evolve. Endries management is looking forward to utilizing visualization and heat maps to further identify inefficiencies and support the company's ongoing restructuring as it continues to transform its warehouses and processes across the organization. Endries is committed to an environment of continual innovation, ongoing training, and refining best practices to help the company achieve its goals, and Infor WMS is the ideal solution to help the company accomplish this.

[LEARN MORE](#) 



Infor is a global leader in business cloud software specialized by industry. Over 65,000 organizations in more than 175 countries rely on Infor's 17,000 employees to help achieve their business goals. Visit www.infor.com.

Follow us:     