

“The installation of Manhattan Associates’ Warehouse Management solution, running on the IBM i platform, has resulted in improved accuracy and efficiency, and has also ensured visibility to real time supply chain information.”

Bob Cliff, Project Leader, Canon UK



Manhattan’s Warehouse Management provides original solution to Canon UK

EXISTING SYSTEM UNABLE TO MANAGE ORDER FULFILMENT COMPLEXITY

Canon is a world leader in supplying imaging products and solutions for digital home and office environments. With three regional headquarters in Japan, the Americas and Europe, Canon has become one of the few brands to really succeed in both the business and consumer markets.

The strength of Canon’s brand creates one of its most complex challenges. With a range of almost 4,000 core merchandise items and 40,000 different spare part SKUs, the company has to be extremely careful in the way it processes and fulfils customer orders. Accuracy and efficiency are paramount, especially since an order often comprises many different items. For example, a camera may need to be packed with a whole host of additional and peripheral items—such as a case, batteries, film, flash and extra lenses.

The demand for more and more peripheral items to complement and support its core products led Canon to realise that its existing partially automated, partially paper-based systems were becoming increasingly vulnerable to the growing complexity of its order fulfilment operation. Moreover, the existing system in place at its 250,000 sq. ft. European distribution centre in Coalville, Leicestershire, did not offer any accurate product location tracking.

MANHATTAN WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT MEETS OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES; INTEGRATES EASILY WITH OTHER SYSTEMS

To meet demand, and to ensure customer satisfaction, Canon decided it needed to invest in a more advanced warehouse management system to effectively store and efficiently move the large range of SKUs required to meet its customer orders. Further operational challenges included providing a solution to fit Canon’s complex pallet putaway rules, improving and streamlining the company’s bulk picking process, and providing improved accuracy in the packing of inventory for Canon’s parcel and bulk businesses.



Headquarters:
Woodhatch, England
Distribution centres: 1
Platform: IBM i
Manhattan solution:
Warehouse Management
RF equipment:
Motorola RF Terminals

Challenge:

Canon’s existing system was unable to meet the increasingly complex requirements of its distribution system.

Goal:

Canon wanted to streamline the picking process, increase order accuracy and track product location.

Solution:

Manhattan’s solution offered unique functionality to meet Canon’s needs and integrated easily with the company’s RF scanners to track products.

Results:

Canon increased productivity, improved order accuracy, gained visibility throughout the warehouse and streamlined return tracking.

After an extensive review of the warehouse management systems on the market, Canon selected Manhattan Associates' Warehouse Management solution, to run on the proven and reliable IBM i platform. Key to the selection process was the ease with which Manhattan Associates' Warehouse Management solution could be interfaced with Canon's order management system and with the radio frequency (RF) scanners and portable printers from Motorola that Canon planned to use within the warehouse.

The Warehouse Management solution, together with these other tools, provided Canon with real-time visibility and traceability of all its warehouse stock. Additionally, Manhattan Associates' Warehouse Management solution also allowed for accurate bulk picking and routing into and out of dispatch lanes. According to Bob Cliff, Canon's Project Leader, "No other system could offer this functionality."

.....

"We have just completed our first annual stock check since implementation, with impressive results compared to stock checks before the deployment of Manhattan's solution. We are now about to start using the Warehouse Management solution's "Real Time Cycle Counting" functionality, which should do away with the necessity to close the business twice annually to perform a wall-to-wall physical count."

Bob Cliff, Project Leader, Canon UK

.....

MANHATTAN SOLUTION OFFERS GREATER ACCURACY AND EFFICIENCY

Canon decided to implement Manhattan's Warehouse Management solution in two stages. The first covered the core merchandising operation, while the second stage focused on the company's spare parts operation. Canon's business faced little interruption during either phase of the Warehouse Management implementation, and within one week of go-live the company had returned to the levels of orders being shipped prior to the go-live date.

Bob Cliff, in talking about Canon's experience of deploying the system, says, "Canon wanted to do things the same way as before, only better. The installation of Manhattan's Warehouse Management solution, running on the the IBM i platform, has resulted in improved accuracy and efficiency, and has also ensured visibility to real-time supply chain information. The solution fitted into Canon's business with a minimum number of modifications, which is exactly what we were seeking."

In addition, Cliff comments, "We have just completed our first annual stock check since implementation, with impressive results compared to stock checks before the deployment of Manhattan's solution. We are now about to start using the Warehouse Management solution's "Real Time Cycle Counting" functionality, which should do away with the necessity to close the business twice annually to perform a wall-to-wall physical count."

NEW SYSTEM PROVIDES INSTANT INFORMATION AND STREAMLINES PICKING AND PACKING

Instant information availability and delivery has enabled Canon to revolutionise its packing operation. Portable printers that plug into Motorola's RF terminals interface with Manhattan's Warehouse Management solution, allowing pickers to print outbound shipping labels whilst working within dispatch lanes—making the packing operation simultaneous and real-time.

This was a trail-blazing collaborative exercise for Manhattan and Motorola, and proved highly beneficial for Canon. The Warehouse Management solution also provided an effective solution for Canon's kitting requirements. Using the solution, Canon can locate each SKU required for a kit and direct the product to the kitting area to be quickly assembled and packed.

Furthermore, Manhattan's Warehouse Management solution allows Canon to track serial numbers for printers, faxes and other equipment and, if a product is returned, the Warehouse Management solution records those details and feeds them back to the host system where product service records are updated.