

“With the solutions from Manhattan and Vocollect, we have achieved our goal of increasing picking productivity by 25% while improving quality service to our customers. We fill orders to booksellers much faster.”

Drew Bordas, Director, Warehouse Management Systems, Ingram Book Group



INGRAM
INGRAM BOOK GROUP

Headquarters: LaVergne, TN

Platform: IBM i

Distribution Centers: 4

Manhattan solutions:
Warehouse Management; Audit, Payment & Claims; Supply Chain Intelligence

Voice solution: Vocollect Voice

Ingram Book Group talks its way to supply chain savings with Manhattan’s solutions and Vocollect Voice

Complex Network of Inventory, Consumers and Distribution Channels Creates a Unique Set of Supply Chain Challenges

Ingram Book Group is the world’s largest wholesale distributor of books and audio books to booksellers, librarians and specialty retailers. Great customer service is the cornerstone of Ingram’s success and, since 1964, the company has provided the book industry with innovations that make doing business easier and more cost-effective. Ingram Book Group ships to retailers as well as directly to consumers on behalf of online booksellers. The company stocks 1.4 million titles (SKUs) in its four distribution centers (DCs) and order sizes can vary dramatically—from one unit up to 50,000 units. Ingram’s complex network of inventory, consumers, distribution channels and facility coordination creates a unique set of supply chain challenges.

Ingram Builds on Warehouse Management Foundation to Further Cut Costs

Ingram has a keen understanding of the business opportunities and bottom-line benefits available through strategic supply chain management and has implemented a number of Manhattan Associates solutions in its DCs. Most recently, Ingram introduced Vocollect Voice. Explains Drew Bordas, director of warehouse management systems for Ingram, “With regard to our supply chain, we’re experiencing what everyone else is. We’re all trying to cut costs and make distribution faster and more efficient. Our executives ask, ‘What can we do to leverage WMS?’ For us, the answer came in a ‘building-block’ fashion.”

“First we achieved a great Warehouse Management solution with Manhattan; then, we implemented Vocollect Voice as the next cost-cutting strategy. Paper, keyboards and RF scanners don’t fit with the physical nature of a DC worker’s job so we replaced these with voice.” Ingram was able to move from scanners to voice with confidence, knowing that Manhattan had already developed a fully integrated, real-time, direct interface to Vocollect Voice for its Warehouse

Challenge:

Ingram challenged with an increasingly complex network of consumers, distribution channels and facility coordination.

Goal:

Increase supply chain efficiency, Reduce distribution costs, increase speed and efficiency in serving its customers.

Solution:

Manhattan’s Warehouse Management, Audit Payment & Claims and Supply Chain Intelligence along with Vocollect Voice.

Result:

25% improvement in picking productivity enables Ingram to fill orders to booksellers faster and more efficiently reach a wider customer base.





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**Drew Bordas, Director, Warehouse Management Systems
Ingram Book Group**



Management for IBM i. The entire solution was purchased from Manhattan, who, as an authorized Vocollect Voice reseller, also implements and supports it.

New Solutions Implemented in Phased Approach Without Disrupting Customer Service

Ingram used a phased approach to implementation and training to achieve incremental improvements without interrupting service to its customers. This was particularly important for the LaVergne, Tennessee facility—Ingram’s largest DC—which had the most to gain from voice in terms of order selection productivity, yet the greatest potential for interruption from the implementation process. “Order selection is crucial for us,” said Bordas. “This is such a large payroll department and there is so much walking and time involved in it. We knew voice would enable us to have a widespread financial impact. Yet, we weren’t willing to just flip a switch to voice, so we ramped up slowly and had a seamless transition. The time Manhattan Associates invested and their ability to gradually incorporate the technology allowed us to implement the solutions without interrupting service to our customers.”

Ingram Book Increases Picking Productivity by 25% and Reaches a Wider, More Diverse Customer Base

With its innovative solutions in place, Ingram has far exceeded its goal of increasing picking productivity. The initial projected return on investment was for a 10% improvement, and a 13.2% improvement was budgeted for 2007—however, Ingram is currently seeing 25% improvement in picking productivity. This dramatic increase in productivity has been achieved without sacrificing quality service to Ingram’s customers. In fact, Ingram now fills orders to booksellers faster, enabling publishers to more efficiently reach a wider, increasingly diverse customer base.

Vocollect Voice has also provided important safety benefits as workers are less distracted with equipment and paperwork. An additional bonus is its ability to provide simple, step-by-step instructions for the ultimate on-the-job training experience so new workers learn independently and are productive on their first day. As a result, training time has been cut in half at Ingram. “Our positions for order selectors have historically been seen as entry level,” said Bordas. “But for the first time ever, we’ve had people from other departments who want to work in order selection. This is due to Vocollect Voice—it’s cutting-edge, and our employees think it’s cool. In fact, when we take people on tours, you’d think we had ‘Star Wars’ out there. It’s amazing to see the reactions. Worker satisfaction has skyrocketed.”

The implementation of Manhattan’s solutions and Vocollect Voice enables Ingram to leverage its supply chain to sustain competitive advantage and deliver on the promise of its brand. Ingram benefits from the increased ROI and its customers benefit from the accurate and efficient service they receive.