



ProVision WMS
By Ahearn & Soper Inc

EBOOK / 2026 EDITION

Modernise your legacy WMS without stopping the floor.

How to upgrade your warehouse management system
without disrupting daily operations.

EDITION

2026

CHAPTERS

Five

FROM

Ahearn & Soper, Canada

CONTENTS

In this eBook

A practical guide for operations, IT and finance leaders: how to tell when a system is holding you back, how to plan the move, how to protect data and integrations, how to bring people with you and how to choose a partner.

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INTRODUCTION

Modernise without stopping the floor

Many warehouses still run on a management system that was built or heavily customised years ago. It works, mostly. But every workaround, side spreadsheet and integration nobody wants to touch adds cost and risk that rarely shows up in one budget line.

This eBook is a practical guide for operations, IT and finance leaders weighing an upgrade. It covers how to tell when a system is holding you back, how to plan, which migration approach suits your risk, how to move data and integrations safely, and how to bring people with you.

How to use it

Chapters 1 to 4 are vendor neutral. Chapter 5 shows how to evaluate a partner, explains where ProVision WMS fits, and closes with a readiness checklist for your own project meetings.

A NOTE ON NUMBERS

We have not quoted industry averages for savings or efficiency. Record your own baseline before you start, so the results you report are your own.

THE PATH THROUGH THIS EBOOK

Five stages of a modernisation project

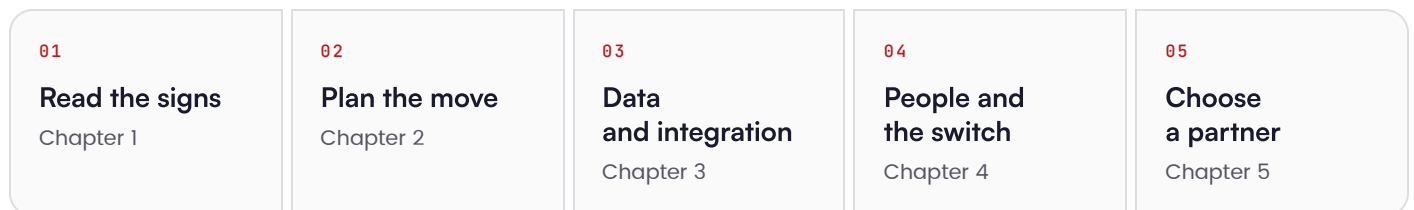
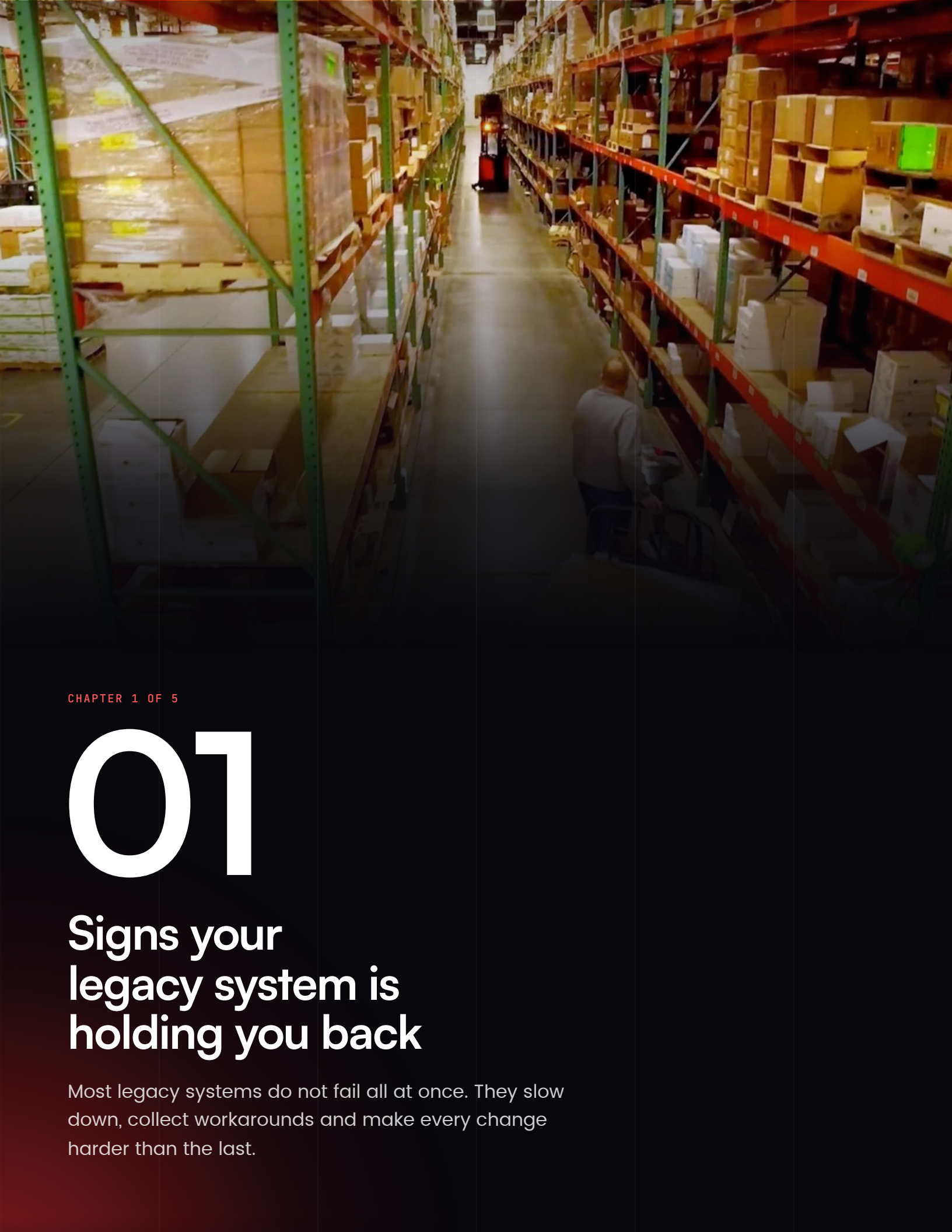


FIGURE 1. THE ORDER OF A TYPICAL MODERNISATION PROJECT, AS SET OUT IN THE CHAPTERS OF THIS EBOOK.



CHAPTER 1 OF 5

01

Signs your legacy system is holding you back

Most legacy systems do not fail all at once. They slow down, collect workarounds and make every change harder than the last.

WARNING SIGNS

Six signs it is time to look again

01

Unsupported technology

The system runs on an operating system or database its vendor no longer supports, and few people can maintain it.

02

Integration gaps

New ERP, ecommerce or carrier connections need custom work, or cannot be built, because there is no usable API.

03

Dated screens

Interfaces designed before mobile devices slow people down and make training new staff take longer than it should.

04

Reporting by spreadsheet

Managers export data and rebuild reports by hand because the system cannot show stock and orders as they stand.

05

Strain at peak

More volume, a second site or a new client brings slowdowns, freezes or another round of custom development.

06

Workarounds everywhere

Paper lists and manual checks fill the gaps, and the knowledge of how they work sits with one or two people.



THE RISK OF WAITING

What standing still costs

Deferring an upgrade can look like the safe choice. In practice the costs keep growing. They are simply spread across departments, where they are hard to see.

- **Maintenance:** ageing systems need more frequent fixes and specialist skills that are harder to find
- **Productivity:** manual workarounds take time on every shift
- **Security:** software that no longer receives updates is harder to protect
- **Compliance:** lot, expiry and traceability requirements can outgrow what the system records
- **Customers:** slower, less accurate fulfilment shows up as late orders and returns
- **People:** critical know-how rests with a few long serving staff

TRY THIS

List every workaround your teams use in a week. Each one is a requirement for the new system, and a cost the old one is already charging you.





CHAPTER 2 OF 5

02

Planning the move and choosing an approach

Good projects are decided before any software is installed: who owns the work, what success looks like and how much risk the floor can carry.

PLANNING

Five decisions to make before you start

Settle these early and the rest of the project has something firm to stand on.

01**Name a sponsor**

An executive who owns the outcome, clears blockers and signs off changes to scope.

- Owns budget and scope
- Chairs a short steering meeting

02**Build the team**

Operations, IT, finance and a floor lead, with authority to decide quickly.

- Named backfill for busy roles
- One decision maker per area

03**Map today**

Document processes, data, devices, reports and every integration, including the unofficial ones.

- Process maps by area
- A list of every report in use

04**Define success**

Record your own baseline for accuracy, pick errors, order cycle time and overtime, then set targets.

- Targets tied to your baseline
- Agreed before vendor demos

05**Plan for slack**

Build contingency into budget and timeline, and keep cutover clear of your peak season.

- A contingency line in the budget
- A cutover date outside peak

Write these five decisions into a one page project charter and have the sponsor sign it.

MIGRATION APPROACHES

Big bang, phased or parallel

TABLE 1. THREE WAYS TO MOVE FROM A LEGACY SYSTEM

	BIG BANG	PHASED	PARALLEL
How it works	One planned cutover in a quiet window	Functions or sites move in stages	Both systems run side by side, then cut over
Main strength	One cutover to manage; everyone moves at once	Each stage is proven before the next	Results can be compared; rollback is immediate
Main risk	Little room to roll back once live	Longer timeline and temporary links	Double data entry and a heavy staff load
Best suited to	One site, clean data, a quiet period	Several sites or complex operations	Operations where errors are very costly
Testing needed	Extensive, before cutover	At every stage	Daily reconciliation of both systems

Many projects combine approaches, for example a phased rollout by site with a short parallel run at the first one.



Matching the approach to your operation

There is no single right answer. The best approach is the one your operation can absorb while still shipping orders on time.

Questions that decide it

- How critical is uninterrupted shipping, and when is your quietest period?
- How many sites, clients or business units will move?
- How clean is your item, location and customer data today?
- How many integrations must work on day one?
- How much time can your team give alongside their day jobs?

Protect daily operations

Whatever you choose, write a rollback plan, agree who can call it, and keep extra people on the floor for the first weeks after go-live.

RULE OF THUMB

If most answers point to complexity, phase the move. If the operation is simple and the data is clean, one well rehearsed cutover can be the shorter path.



The background of the entire page is a dark, blue-toned digital landscape. In the center, there are several rows of server racks, each composed of many horizontal slots, some of which are illuminated with a soft blue light. The racks are arranged in a perspective that recedes into the distance. On the floor of this digital space, there are glowing orange and yellow lines that resemble circuit board traces or data pathways, winding around the base of the server racks. The overall atmosphere is high-tech and futuristic.

CHAPTER 3 OF 5

03

Data, integration and testing

A new system is only as good as the data and connections it starts with. Most go-live problems trace back to one or the other.

DATA MIGRATION

Move clean data, not old problems

Treat data migration as its own workstream with an owner, not a task for the final week.

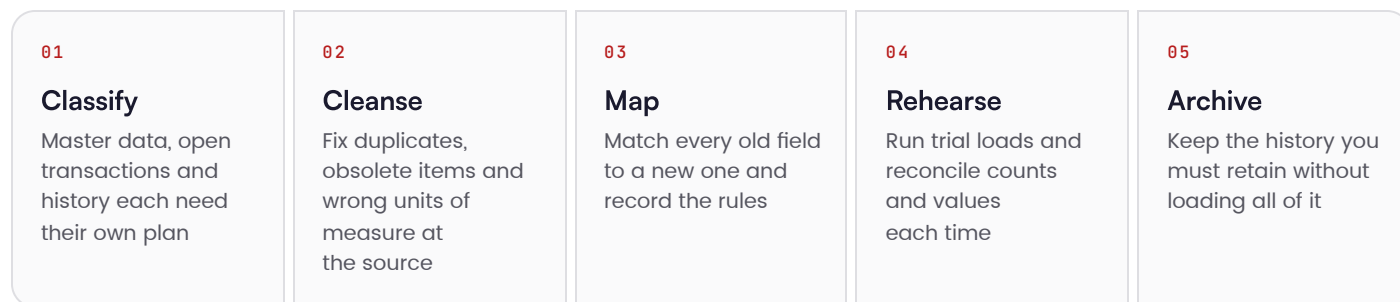
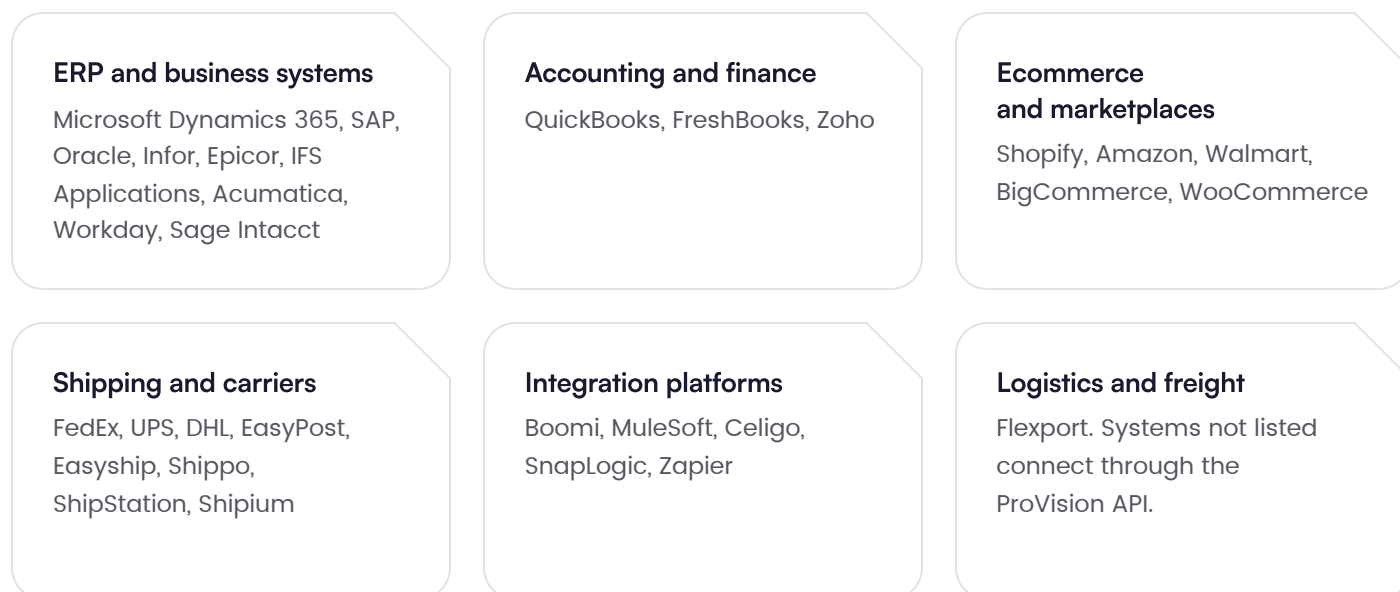


FIGURE 2. THE FIVE STAGES OF A DATA MIGRATION WORKSTREAM, AS SET OUT IN THIS CHAPTER.

PROVISION WMS INTEGRATIONS

Connections available today



Source: ahearn.com/provisionwms, integrations FAQ. The list grows on a continuous cycle. Published timelines: ERP connections 2 to 4 months, complex ERP 3 to 12 months, API connections 2 to 6 weeks (8 to 16 weeks where new endpoints are needed).

INTEGRATION TIMELINES

How long connections take to build



FIGURE 3. AXIS IN MONTHS. TIMELINES AS PUBLISHED AT [AHEARN.COM/PROVISIONWMS](https://www.ahearn.com/provisionwms). YOUR TIMELINE DEPENDS ON SCOPE AND THE SYSTEMS INVOLVED.

TESTING

Test as if it were already live

Testing is where a project earns its confidence. Use your own products, locations, orders and exceptions, not demonstration data.

Four layers of testing

- **Configuration:** each rule, location and label does what was agreed
- **Integration:** orders, stock and shipments flow both ways without manual fixes
- **User acceptance:** floor and office staff run real scenarios, including returns and short picks
- **Volume:** the system holds up on your peak day, not your average one

Go-live readiness

Before cutover, confirm sign-off on every layer, a rehearsed data load, trained users on every shift and a rollback plan with a named decision maker.

WRITE IT DOWN

Agree acceptance criteria before testing starts, so a pass or a fail is a fact rather than an opinion.

BEFORE CUTOVER

A cutover is only as safe as the rollback plan behind it. Write it, rehearse it and name who can call it.



CHAPTER 4 OF 5

04

People, training and the switch

Software changes in a weekend. Habits take longer. The projects that land well bring the floor in early and stay close after go-live.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Bring the floor with you

People resist change they do not understand. Explain why the system is changing, what it means for each role and what will stay the same.

- **Involve users early:** let experienced pickers and receivers shape the new processes
- **Name champions:** one per shift or area, trained first and trusted by peers
- **Train on your own data:** short, role based sessions close to go-live
- **Support the first weeks:** visible help on the floor and a clear way to report issues
- **Close the loop:** act on feedback and tell people what changed

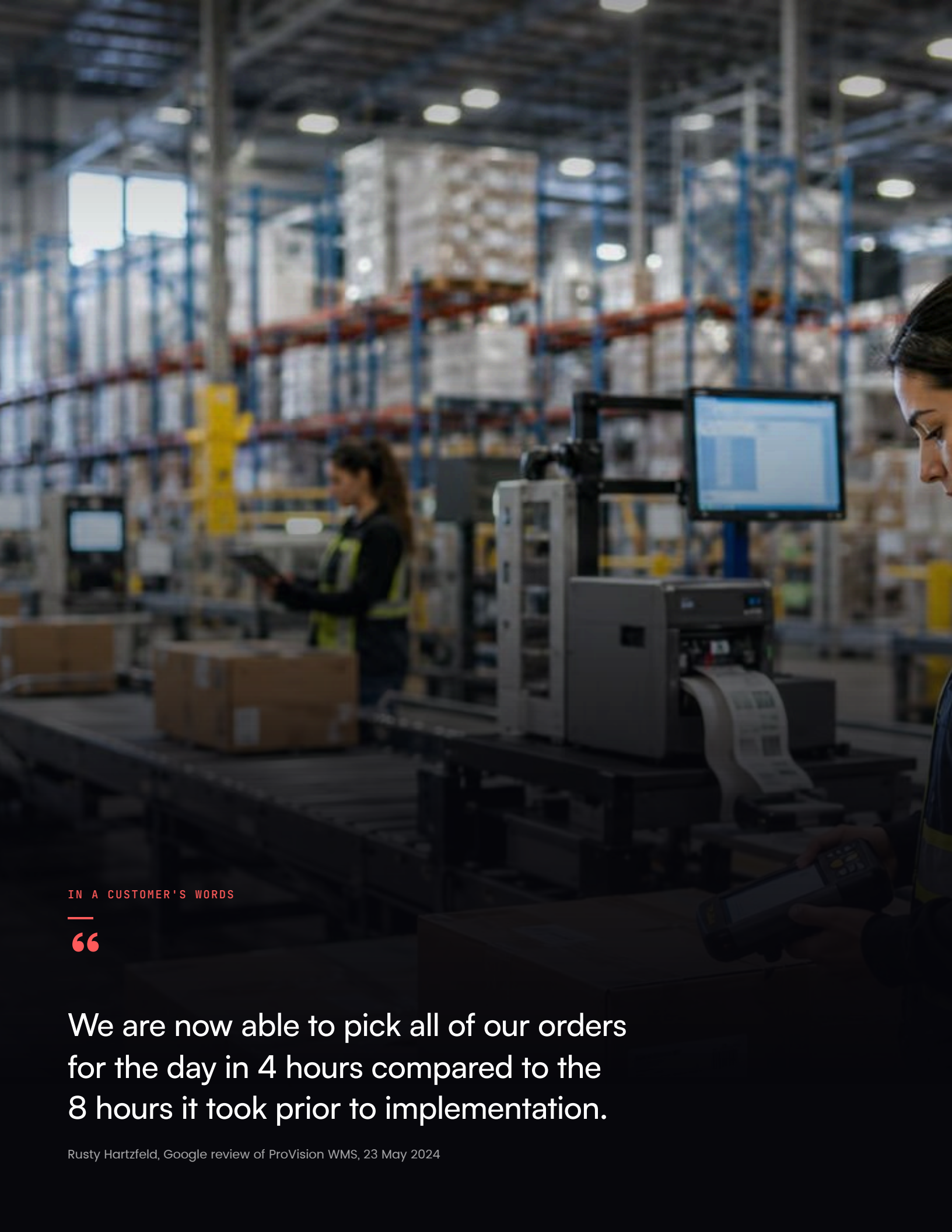
After go-live

Review results against the baseline you recorded at the start. Use what you learn to tune rules and reports, and plan the next round of improvements.

PLAN FOR EVERY SHIFT

Night and weekend teams are easy to miss. Schedule their training and floor support as carefully as the day shift's.





IN A CUSTOMER'S WORDS

“

We are now able to pick all of our orders for the day in 4 hours compared to the 8 hours it took prior to implementation.

Rusty Hartzfeld, Google review of ProVision WMS, 23 May 2024



CHAPTER 5 OF 5

05

Choosing a partner and getting ready

The right partner reduces risk long after go-live. Ask direct questions, speak to references and look closely at who will support you.

VENDOR EVALUATION

Questions to ask any WMS vendor

TABLE 2. EVALUATION CRITERIA

AREA	QUESTIONS TO ASK
Functional fit	Does the core cover receiving, putaway, picking, packing and shipping as you run them, without custom code?
Integration	Which of your systems connect today, and who builds and supports each connection?
Deployment	Can it run in the cloud or on your own servers, and what changes between the two?
Implementation	Who configures, trains and supports go-live, and do they also build the software?
Support and upgrades	How do you raise an issue, who answers, and how are upgrades delivered?
Commercial terms	How is it priced, are there transaction fees, and what does support include?

Ask every vendor for references from operations like yours, and speak to them before you sign.

THE CORE ENGINE

One engine from dock to dock

All three ProVision WMS solutions run on the same core engine, so an order keeps one record from receipt to shipment.

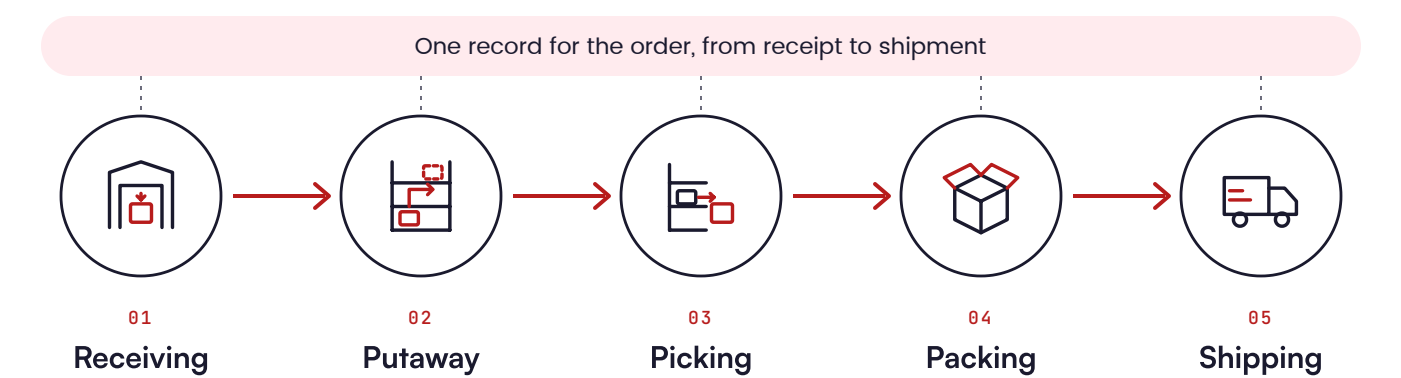


FIGURE 4. THE PROVISION WMS CORE ENGINE, AS PUBLISHED ON [AHEARN.COM/PROVISION](https://www.ahearn.com/provision).

PROVISION WMS

How ProVision WMS answers those questions

ProVision WMS is the warehouse management system from Ahearn & Soper, built and supported in Canada.

- Three solutions on one core engine: receiving, putaway, picking, packing and shipping
- Cloud or your own servers, with the same software and support team
- Real-time inventory control with multi-client segregation and flexible billing
- Directed picking as standard, with lot, serial and expiry tracking
- RF device support and EDI integration
- Unlimited orders and SKUs, no transactional fees, annual upgrades included with support

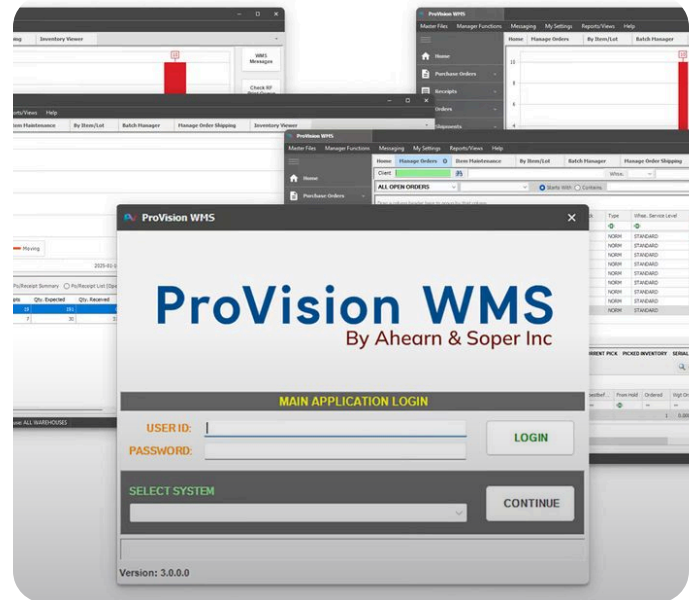


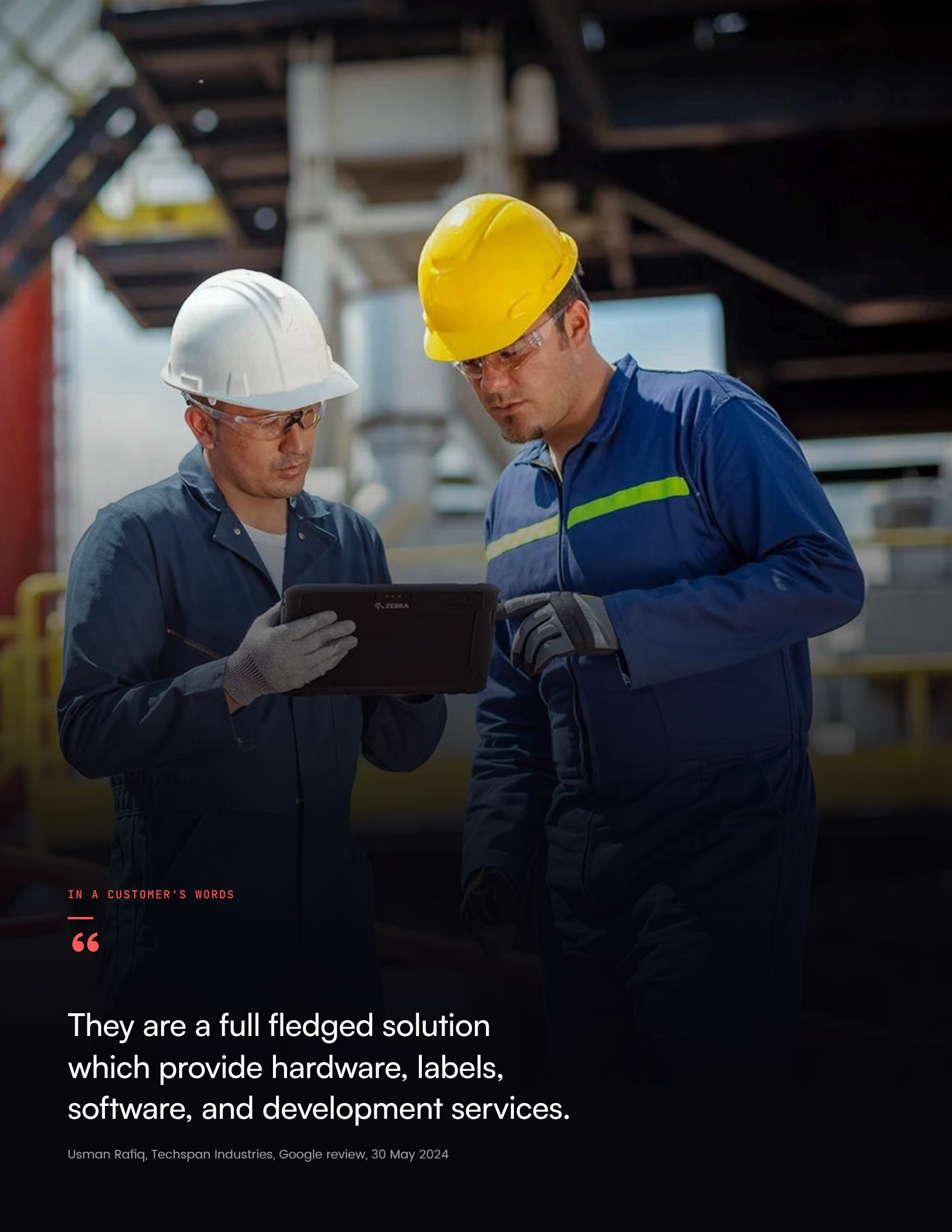
FIGURE 5. PROVISION WMS APPLICATION SCREENS.

THE COMPANY BEHIND IT

One Canadian team, from software to support

Ahearn & Soper is a Canadian supply chain technology company based in Toronto, with eight offices across Canada and 50 years in the field.

ProVision WMS is designed, implemented and supported by one Canadian partner. Implementation, integration and support come from the team that builds the software.



IN A CUSTOMER'S WORDS

“

They are a full fledged solution
which provide hardware, labels,
software, and development services.

Usman Rafiq, Techspan Industries, Google review, 30 May 2024

READINESS CHECKLIST

Modernisation readiness checklist

01

Before you start

- Executive sponsor named
- Project team in place
- Processes and data documented
- Baseline measures recorded
- Budget and contingency approved

02

Before you build

- Partner selected, contract signed
- Migration approach agreed
- Integrations listed and designed
- Data migration plan agreed
- Communication plan launched

03

Before go-live

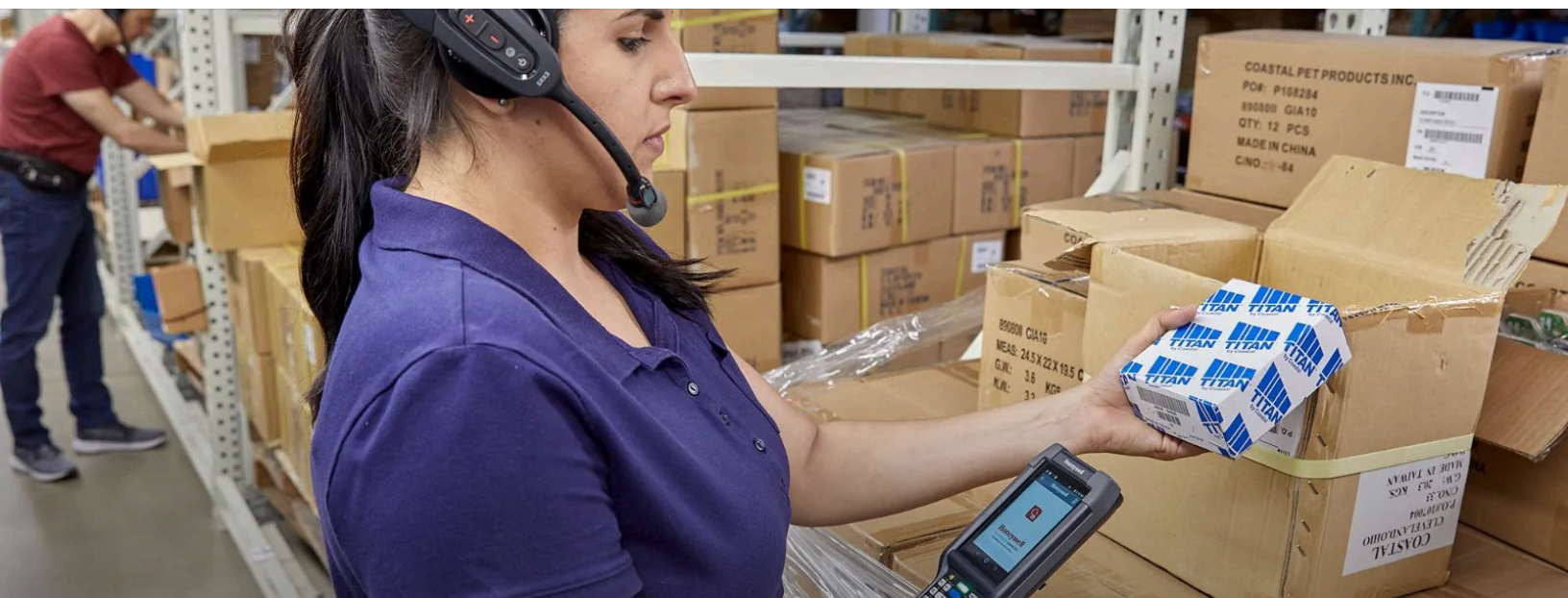
- Every test layer signed off
- Trial data loads reconciled
- Users trained on every shift
- Rollback plan rehearsed
- Floor support scheduled

04

After go-live

- Results measured against baseline
- Issues tracked to closure
- Feedback acted on
- Lessons learned shared
- Next improvements planned

Copy this checklist into your project plan and give every line an owner and a date.



NEXT STEP

Tell us where your system holds you back.

Tell us what your current system does well and where it holds you back. We will show you what a move to ProVision WMS would involve for your operation.

Talk to an expert

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