



## CASE STUDY – MEYERS WAREHOUSE

### **3PL Improves Inventory & Shipping Accuracy with Warehouse Management System**

*Integrator replaces inefficient, manual system for food distributor*



Over the past 34 years, New Orleans-based Meyers Warehouse has provided high-quality food grade warehousing and trucking services to corporations throughout the United States. A family-owned and operated business, Meyers Warehouse has a total storage capacity exceeding 195,000 square feet over four buildings, a three acre container yard and a growing fleet for transportation services.

#### **The Business Challenge:**

After recovering from devastating and complete losses from hurricane Katrina, Meyers Warehouse rebuilt its business from the ground up. A mandate from its primary customer, Domino Sugar, required them to automate their current, manual warehousing, inventory and shipping functions to accommodate an increase in forthcoming business. Not only was automation being required by their customer, it was also necessary to improve business operations since Meyers was experiencing unacceptable levels of mis-shipments, lost or misplaced inventory, and non-compliance with FIFO (First In First Out) due to manual inventory procedures and warehouse operations. Additionally, because Meyers Warehouse bought an existing complex of buildings rather than build from scratch after the flood, they faced several challenges with the existing structures, including large amounts of bad data cabling that required replacement.

#### **Additional Factors:**

Meyers Warehouse customer, Domino Sugar, was a primary driver of the warehouse automation initiative. It had a strong relationship with another warehouse management system (WMS) integrator through one of its other regional 3PL companies in another state. This regional 3PL was heavily endorsing its vendor to be the warehouse management software provider as well. The WMS package being endorsed, however, came with bundled financial modules not needed by Meyers Warehouse, along with a higher price tag. Additionally, the software provider was unable to install and support the hardware devices needed for the solution. Meyers wanted a turnkey WMS solution strictly to monitor inventory and improve or eliminate incidents of mis-shipments and non-compliance.

Despite pressure from Domino Sugar to select its software package and provider of choice, Meyers preferred a single vendor that could provide—and more importantly support—all facets of its new warehouse system, including the software and hardware.



### The Solution:

Inovity, formerly BarCode ID Systems', sales and engineering staff understood Meyers' project needs and proposed an integrated, comprehensive solution to fit its requirements across four campus buildings. They offered the turnkey solution Meyers required, which included warehousing software, mobile computing and wireless networking hardware, rack and product labeling to enable accurate scanning of 4-tier warehouse shelving by ground operators, system integration, training and support—all from one single and accountable point of contact. Additionally, the proposed software solution would address Meyers' immediate usage needs and accommodate for future growth, without requiring the purchase of unnecessary financial components that duplicated the existing accounting system Meyers had in place.

Using a teamwork approach with its vendors and long-time business partners, Inovity offered Meyers Warehouse a complete solution to fit its warehouse project requirements, consisting of:

- *Visual Warehouse* warehouse management software for receiving, put-away, pick, ship and kit, and SAP modifications (Kare Technologies)
- Wireless network infrastructure and corrective data cabling to replace existing, bad cables (including site survey, data survey and hardware (RFS6000 wireless network controllers and AP650 access points from Motorola Solutions)
- Handheld mobile computers (MC9090s) with long-range Lorax scan engines from Motorola Solutions
- 105SL thermal transfer barcode printers from Zebra Technologies
- Preprinted location/rack and product labels
- Integration to SAP ERP system
- On-site pre-configuration and installation

Meyers Warehouse selected Inovity as its vendor of choice for their warehouse management project for several reasons. First, Meyers needed and welcomed the business-partnership mentality with which Inovity approached the entire project. Meyers needed a trusted advisor to work with them through the complex issues of moving from a manual operation to an automated one, of adapting existing buildings' infrastructure to more modern needs, and fitting their immediate and future warehouse requirements without extraneous features or expensive, unnecessary functionality. Secondly, Meyers wanted one provider who could deliver a complete, turnkey solution and be one point of accountability for the entire project. Because Inovity fit these requirements, Meyers Warehouse selected them as their vendor.

### The Results:

Moving from a manual to an automated inventory control system was a welcome change for the chaotic warehouse environment of Meyers Warehouse. The five fundamental modules of the *Visual Warehouse* software—receiving, put-away, pick, kit and ship—immediately improved inventory visibility from receipt of goods to final shipping. Product tracking went from a manual process with misplaced inventory and lost items, to a fully automated process that has virtually eliminated mis-shipments and complies with FIFO standards. Warehouse worker efficiency and productivity also improved with directed picking and put-away instructions via wireless networking and mobile computing.



Because of increased accuracy and inventory handling, Meyers Warehouse was able to accommodate an increase in business from Domino Sugar with no reduction in accuracy, efficiency or service levels. Since the system has been in place, they have experienced a dramatic increase in accuracy, efficiency and productivity.

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*Formerly BarCode ID Systems, Inovity is a business process improvement company that transforms technology into powerful, integrated solutions that drive efficiency and reduce costs. As a specialty IT systems integrator, Inovity designs and delivers innovative solutions that connect and relay crucial business information between all points of operational activity, in real time. By emphasizing workforce mobility, ERP data mobilization and business process intelligence, Inovity provides automated technology solutions for manufacturing, distribution, healthcare, retail and field service environments.*

*The company was established in 1993, is privately owned with headquarters in Atlanta and maintains sales and engineering offices in Atlanta, Chicago, Boston, Greenville, SC, Greensboro, NC, Columbus, OH, Huntsville, AL and Ft. Lauderdale. With innovation at its core, combined with solutions for productivity, agility, efficiency, connectivity, and visibility, BarCode ID Systems has become Inovity. Contact Julie A. Leonard, Marketing Director, 800-452-7418, ext. 9045, [jleonard@inovity.com](mailto:jleonard@inovity.com), [www.inovity.com](http://www.inovity.com).*