

THE IMPACT OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES IN WAREHOUSING AND DISTRIBUTION

Mobile applications with ROI benefits

August 27th, 2018 • Innovation Enterprise • Joe Scioscia

In the always-connected world we live in, we all rely more on technology in our everyday, professional lives to communicate and get work done. Today, it's almost impossible to operate a successful business without embedding technology in the work environment. As such, countless companies are going through digital transformations to work more efficiently and stay competitive in an ever-changing digital world. From retail to warehousing, all industries are relying on mobile devices and applications to get work done.

The warehousing industry has particularly embraced the recent boom in mobile technologies. Designing mobility into everyday work processes is a natural evolution for warehouses in order to bring more accuracy and speed to tasks within supply chains. With growing investments in these

digital solutions, companies are reaping the benefits of real-time data, enhanced communication with employees, added efficiency in work procedures, increased sales, and much more. The technology we use in our everyday lives can now blend seamlessly into the technology we use in our work environments, allowing employees to quickly adopt the skills needed to deploy the technology successfully in the field.

As mobile technologies continue to expand and evolve, software companies are investing heavily in developing mobile apps designed to streamline work processes and enhance customer service, in turn resulting in ROI benefits. Mobile apps are designed today specifically to meet the needs of warehouses and supply chains. These mobile solutions turn ordinary smartphones and tablets

into powerful business tools that improve efficiencies, enhance customer service, and increase sales, ultimately saving countless man hours and diminishing error across the board.

Mobile warehouse management

The warehousing and distribution industries are characterized by a complex system of constantly moving parts that must be easily traced and accounted for in order to ensure timely production and delivery of the product. That's where mobile warehouse management apps come in.

Providing transparency to all corners of the warehouse, mobile warehousing is an integral part of the complicated operations within a warehouse. Mobile warehouse management apps allow companies to enhance overall operations and replace expensive radio frequency (RF) technology

with modern mobile devices that are more familiar to the employee and cheaper to deploy. By leveraging touchscreen displays on mobile devices, data can be presented in a clear and concise, easy to read format that reduces training time and speeds up operations by enabling seamless communication throughout the warehouse. Warehouse management apps also have the ability to connect to larger warehouse management software (WMS) systems, giving employees access to inventory in real-time and expediting typical warehouse processes by scanning items directly into the system, rather than updating the system manually at a later time.

With abilities including picking and shipment verification, receiving and put-away, cycle and physical counting and product inquiry, these types of management apps are essential to warehousing companies that depend on accuracy and efficiency to stay successful.

Proof of delivery & route sales

In the quickly growing distribution industry, mobile apps that offer proof of delivery are becoming increasingly more popular to bring confidence back to shippers,

drivers, and customers. These apps provide delivery confirmation, monitor driver performance, and have geo-location tracking capabilities. Previously reliant on pen and paper and word of mouth, companies in the distribution industry now have the ability to confirm deliveries with GPS tracking or photo proof via proof of delivery mobile apps. With this added transparency, companies save money on what would have been lost product, gain trust with their customers, and are able to receive real-time data of where a driver is and when a product will be delivered. Additionally, proof of delivery apps allow drivers to capture signatures and collect payments directly on their mobile devices, adding assurance to the complex delivery process.

Mobility is enabling distributors to deliver on customers' demanding timeframes, allowing them to produce greater value in less time.

Performing similarly to proof of delivery technology, route sales mobile apps automate the entire shipment process, from truck loading to delivery confirmation. Mobile route sales apps allow distributors to confirm truck loading, track the status of products via GPS and other navigation tools, process orders,

confirm items delivered, collect payments, print or email delivery receipt and invoice, and perform truck settlement. Having all of this information accessible at your fingertips allows manufacturers to easily trace product from the shop floor to the customer's hands, thus improving transparency and accuracy. As supply chains continue to grow and develop globally, automating the processes within these intricate systems will only continue to benefit all parties involved.

Mobile technology is only going to continue to grow as people and businesses become even more accustomed to the convenience of mobile devices at home and in the workplace. These technologies ultimately improve overall customer relationship management (CRM) and result in huge ROI benefits by speeding up mundane work processes, adding transparency throughout the supply chain and ensuring that the customer is always the number one priority. In the ever-so-complex industries of warehousing and distribution, the implementation of mobile technology is a must for continual growth, added value, and customer satisfaction.