

Vocollect by Honeywell Case Study

GraysOnline

Australian Online Retail and Auction Company



Voice Results

Objectives

- Greater control and visibility of inventory
- Sustain customer satisfaction
- Optimise labour allocation
- Improve productivity

Application

- Case Picking

Installation

- Vocollect Voice seamlessly integrated with Manhattan SCALE™
- Vocollect Talkman® T5 Mobile Computing Devices
- Vocollect SRX Wireless Headsets
- Vocollect VoiceDirect® Enterprise Connector
- Vocollect VoiceClient® Software

Results

- Greater supply chain control and visibility
- Streamlined supply chain processes for improved efficiencies and productivity
- 15-20% productivity improvement
- 33% productivity gains in order fulfilment for wines and spirits
- Greatly enhanced worker satisfaction levels and order fulfillment efficiency due to the 'Hands-Free, Eyes-Free™' nature of the voice solution
- Much faster training and getting workers up to speed with voice-directed solution, resulting in better deployment of human resources to meet crunch time needs
- Improved services levels to customers

GraysOnline Grows Business and Boosts Productivity by 15-20% with Vocollect Voice® and Manhattan SCALE™

Introduction

GraysOnline is an Australian online retail and auction company, offering a huge range of consumer, industrial and commercial goods direct from manufacturers and distributors. Starting out as a livestock auctioneering company in Goulburn in the 1920s, GraysOnline made the decision to move online in 2000 in order to gain access to a deeper and broader market base.

Today, GraysOnline employs more than 550 people throughout Australia and New Zealand, incorporating a highly-trained customer service team as well as experts across more than 80 product categories ranging from electronic goods and wine, to automotive and mining equipment. In total, the company sells around 230,000 items each month to both consumers and businesses.

Since the company made the decision to migrate online almost 14 years ago, it has grown consistently year-on-year with its annual turnover increasing from \$50 million to more than \$400 million.

It was on the back of this period of unprecedented and continued growth that six years ago, GraysOnline decided to re-evaluate its warehouse operations, which involved consolidating its four existing warehouses into one centralised distribution centre (DC) of 323,000 sq. feet (30,000 sq. meters) at Homebush, Western Sydney. During this time, GraysOnline upgraded its entire warehouse management system (WMS) to Manhattan SCALE: Supply Chain Architected for Logistics Execution, to streamline operations, drive greater efficiencies and introduce some clearly defined processes.

The Challenge

Two companies, one warehouse

Following the successful implementation of an upgraded WMS at its Homebush DC, GraysOnline looked to further extend its engagement with Manhattan Associates to help facilitate continued growth and integrate the inventory of a newly-acquired company – online department store oo.com.au – into its existing warehouse operations with minimal disruption to customers.

While GraysOnline made the decision for the two brands to remain separate, they reviewed oo.com.au's warehouse operations and decided to consolidate all inventory into the one warehouse in Homebush. Previously, oo.com.au was served via its own warehouse in Roseberry. However, its legacy in-house WMS had limitations around control of inventory and the ability to adapt to changing needs.

"If we take our wine division as an example, with the Vocollect Voice/ Manhattan SCALE combination, we are able to ship 2,500 – 3,000 full cartons of wine per day, which is an outstanding achievement given that prior to using any of this technology, we were picking approximately less than a third of this amount with more staff."

Rick Jacobs
Warehouse Manager
GraysOnline

With over 30,000 products and servicing 10,000 customers per week on oo.com.au, GraysOnline needed to ensure the integration of inventory into the Homebush warehouse was seamless and caused limited downtime.

Rick Jacobs, Warehouse Manager at GraysOnline commented, "We made the decision to integrate oo.com.au into GraysOnline's existing warehouse, primarily to reduce long term operational costs and streamline processes, however we needed to ensure that customers of oo.com.au were not impacted at all by the transition to the new warehouse."

The company also recognised that certain processes, including its RF-enabled operations, were becoming out-dated and no longer offered the flexibility, speed and accuracy required to grow the business. Thus, Manhattan recommended voice as the ideal technology for the company's case-picking operation to support GraysOnline's fast-paced e-commerce environment.

To this end, GraysOnline implemented Vocollect Voice to realise the potential of the new WMS.

Vocollect Voice works seamlessly with a real-time interface to Manhattan SCALE, ensuring that all instructions are vocalised clearly to workers, and that their respective responses are correctly verified and registered in the system.

The Vocollect Solution provides a real-time snapshot of the entire picking operation, which is very important - as what happens in one area of a facility can quickly impact other parts in a cascading manner. The information transfer from each worker's voice device to the WMS allows process optimisation in all areas of a facility – making it possible to reduce time per task, combine tasks between workflows, and interleave tasks to eliminate unnecessary downtime.

Additionally, as GraysOnline grows and changes, new workflows and functionalities can be included to meet operational demands. The highly-scalable and flexible voice system is able to support these changes and let its workforce grow with the company's ambitions.

The Solution

Voice grows as the business grows

Vocollect Voice was chosen to replace GraysOnline's out-dated RF-enabled operations because it is a truly mobile solution that provides a 'Hands-Free, Eyes-Free' workflow. Workers can concentrate on fulfilling their tasks without having to flip-and-read slips of order sheets, or constantly punch the keypads of handheld devices.

The Vocollect Solution also facilitates a real-time, two-way data flow between workers on the distribution floor and the WMS,

making it easy for managers to generate monitoring reports, and to provide them with comprehensive and accurate insights on the operation – right down to an individual's performance.

Jacobs stated: "We have experienced great success since deploying Vocollect Voice and implementing Manhattan SCALE into the warehouse, gaining greater control and visibility across our entire supply chain while achieving a 15-20 per cent productivity improvement in our warehousing operations. It was this proven success that made us confident this solution had the flexible nature and integration strength needed to ensure minimal downtime during such a complex task."

Employee safety also has improved on the floor. Because employees' eyes are up and looking at their surroundings at all times, the chances for injury have been significantly reduced.

The Results

A fast and seamless integration

Since the integration, GraysOnline has, and continues to enjoy, innumerable benefits.

"The integration of oo.com.au's inventory into the existing warehouse took less than one month, which is unprecedented, particularly given the scale of inventory and product SKUs that was being integrated. Even more importantly, however, we were still able to service our customers with minimal disruptions to orders and deliveries during this transition period," commented Jacobs.

Following the integration of inventory and an initial settling period, the Group improved productivity across all areas of its warehouse operations, gaining greater visibility and control of inventory, specifically for oo.com.au inventory whilst transitioning to the new carrier.

"We now have far greater visibility of inventory at every stage in the supply chain. Our order picking capacity doubled when we introduced Manhattan SCALE back in 2008. When the solution was subsequently integrated with Vocollect's Solution to give us a voice-directed picking capability, there were further significant gains," said Jacobs.

"If we take our wine division as an example, with the Vocollect Voice/Manhattan SCALE combination, we are able to ship 2,500 – 3,000 full cartons of wine per day, which is an outstanding achievement given that prior to using any of this technology, we were picking approximately less than a third of this amount with more staff."



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About Vocollect by Honeywell

Vocollect by Honeywell is the leading provider of innovative voice-enabled workflow and data collection solutions that help companies with mobile workers run a better business. Together with a global team of over 2,000 Vocollect Certified Professionals, Vocollect enables companies to save more than \$20 billion annually by further optimizing operations, improving business decision capabilities, and delivering the industry's premier worker experience to nearly one million mobile workers who process more than \$5 billion of products every day in challenging industrial environments. Vocollect integrates with all major WMS and ERP systems and supports the industry's leading handheld computing devices.

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