Books Council of Wales: Building an Efficient, Accurate and Resilient Distribution Service

Summary

Customer

Books Council of Wales / Cyngor Llyfrau Cymru
www.books.wales

CYNGOR LLYFRAU CYMRU
BOOKS COUNCIL of WALES

Industry

Book distribution and publishing support

Partners

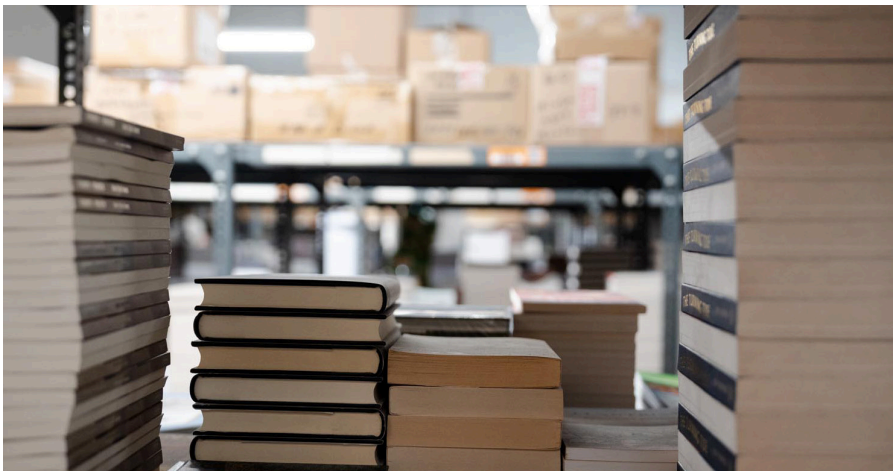
KNK Publishing
Insight Works (ISV)

Solution

- Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central (on-premises)
- Warehouse Insight
- License Plating
- Advanced Inventory Count
- Dynamic Ship
- EasyPost Parcel for Dynamics 365 Business Central
- PrintNode Connector PowerTool

Results

- Inventory count downtime halved, from three days to one and a half days
- Scan-verified picking and packing
- Real-time stock movements with no re-keying
- Mixed pallets moved under a single licence plate
- SSCC-labelled EDI cartons support efficient goods-in
- Backup printing strengthens operational resilience
- Live since April 2024



ABOUT BOOKS COUNCIL OF WALES

The Books Council of Wales is a Welsh Government-supported charity that promotes reading and supports the publishing industry in Wales. From its Distribution Centre in Aberystwyth, the organisation distributes Welsh- and English-language books to retailers across the UK and worldwide. Their purpose-built Distribution Centre houses over a million books at any one time. Receiving, inventory management, order picking, packing and dispatch are managed under one roof.

FROM MANUAL PROCESSES TO REAL-TIME DISTRIBUTION

Before April 2024, picks and stock movements were recorded manually and keyed into a legacy system afterwards. Full inventory counts also required manual entry, closing the warehouse to picking and dispatch for three days.

The move to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, supported by Insight Works applications, introduced mobile, real-time warehouse processing. The objective was not only greater efficiency, but improved accuracy, traceability, resilience and service assurance for publishers, retailers and distribution partners.

SOLUTION: EXTENDING BUSINESS CENTRAL ACROSS THE DISTRIBUTION OPERATION

1. Scan-Driven Picking and Real-Time Stock: Warehouse staff use Warehouse Insight on handheld devices to receive, move, pick and pack directly in Business Central. Scanning verifies items through key warehouse processes, while stock movements are recorded as the physical activity takes place.

2. Mixed-Pallet Tracking and EDI: License Plating allows mixed pallets to move under one licence plate. For EDI orders, mixed-item cartons are allocated SSCC labels, enabling customers to identify carton contents and purchase order information when scanning goods in.

3. Faster Inventory Counts: Advanced Inventory Count enables handheld stock counts to update Business Central directly. Full count downtime has reduced from three days to one and a half days, returning productive time to picking and dispatch.

4. Streamlined Dispatch: Dynamic Ship reduces manual shipping activity and helps address processing bottlenecks, complementing the scan-verified picking and packing operation. Its integration with EasyPost provides real-time tracking

and traceability for all parcels.

5. Operational Resilience: PrintNode Connector PowerTool provides a backup print path if Microsoft print services encounter problems, helping essential put-away documents and invoices continue to be produced. This is a completely free app from Insight Works for Business Central.

ONE GO-LIVE: BUSINESS CENTRAL AND WAREHOUSE MOBILITY TOGETHER

The Books Council of Wales went live with Business Central and the Insight Works applications in April 2024. Insight Works supported planning, solution design, implementation, training and ongoing support. Introducing a new Enterprise Resource Planning system and handheld processing at the same time represented a significant operational change, but staff adapted quickly to the new system. The team rated the experience 5 out of 5.

The next area for investigation is how Copilot in Business Central could support stock ordering, management of older stock and sales reporting.

RESULTS: EFFICIENCY, ASSURANCE AND CAPABILITY

- Full count downtime reduced from three days to one and a half days, returning productive time to picking and dispatch
- Scan verification helps identify incorrect items during picking, catching them at the shelf instead of at the customer
- Stock movements recorded as warehouse activity happens, keeping stock levels in step with the shelves
- Count results post directly to Business Central, removing manual input and its keying errors
- Mixed pallets move under a single licence plate, so staff scan one label instead of every item
- SSCC-labelled EDI cartons support efficient customer receipt, letting customers receive a delivery with a single scan
- Backup printing supports continuity, keeping put-away documents and invoices printing when Microsoft print services have problems

“Moving to scan-based warehouse processes has transformed the efficiency and resilience of our distribution operation. We now have real-time stock movements, scan-verified picking and packing, and significantly faster stock counts. For our publishers and customers, that gives us greater accuracy, traceability and service assurance, while providing a strong platform from which we can grow our distribution services.” **Arwel Evans, Head of Distribution & IT, Books Council of Wales**

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR PUBLISHERS AND DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS

The investment has created a more efficient, accurate and resilient distribution operation. Scan verification, real-time inventory transactions, streamlined dispatch and electronic order processing provide greater control through the warehouse process.

Together with reduced inventory-count downtime, these capabilities provide a stronger platform for the Books Council to support existing publishers and customers and develop new distribution partnerships.

About Insight Works

Insight Works is a Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central ISV (independent software vendor) specializing in warehouse management, manufacturing, and productivity solutions. With a portfolio of apps available on Microsoft Marketplace, Insight Works helps distributors, manufacturers, and wholesalers extend Business Central to fit the way they actually work. Learn more at insight-works.com.

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