



Company overview

For over 40 years, a leading specialty retailer of premium pet food, supplies and services (“Pet Supplies”) has grown from a single store to over 800 stores in 49 states and the District of Columbia. Pet Supplies stores offer more than 10,000 high-quality pet-related products and pet services, including grooming, canine education, vaccination clinics, and photography at competitive prices with superior customer service at convenient locations. Their e-tail business has grown to become one of the leading on-line destinations for premium pet food and supplies in the world.

Situation

Pet Supplies distributes product from 4 distribution centers, using its own fleet of trucks for store deliveries and UPS, FedEx, and USPS to deliver direct to consumer. Prior to implementing Agile’s solution, Pet Supplies used nine disparate carrier-provided systems to process shipments in their various DCs. Shippers were left to decide which shipping system to use, based on availability, level of training, or preference of the operator.

With rising competition, transportation costs, and customer service expectations, Pet Supplies’ Operations Manager is accountable for getting thousands of packages out the door to e-tail customers, cheaper and faster. He realized he needed a way to consolidate and control his shipping operations into one consistent, cost effective process across all locations. He remarked that “the likelihood of on-line buyer’s remorse diminishes as order delivery time gets faster. We needed a way to ensure we could meet our service commitment at the best possible cost, whether shipping internationally or to P.O. Boxes”.

Situation Summary

- Rising transportation costs
- Lack of routing decision support
- Poor shipment status visibility
- Lack of transportation cost control
- Inability to reconcile carrier bills

In addition, with shipping transactions locked up in a myriad of different shipping system databases, Pet Supplies lacked company-wide visibility into order and shipment status. This also made it difficult for customer service to respond promptly to customer inquiries, which resulted in call backs and service delays. Accounting for and reconciling shipping costs challenged finance because data related to transportation spend was fragmented among several systems and reports.

Pet Supplies realized it was time to get visibility and control over his enterprise shipment processes and turned to their local Agile-Network office (“Agile/Pacific”) office for help.

Capabilities Required

Pet Supplies identified the following key system requirements:

1. One system to handle multiple carriers with one automated process for all locations
2. Optimize carrier service selections according to delivery commitment and cost
3. Simplify multi-carrier tracking processes
4. Integration with WMS system

Solution

Agile-Network is a nationwide national organization of transportation and logistics solution experts who for over 20 years have helped over 1,000 companies across many industries reduce transportation costs while automating visibility and control over logistics processes. Agile/Pacific provided Pet Supplies with all of the capabilities they needed to meet and exceed their requirements.



With Agile's solution, orders are first picked, packed, barcoded, and placed on a conveyor. When they reach the shipping station, the operator simply scans the bar code and the system automatically accesses order information from Pet Supplies' WMS system, weighs the carton, determines the best route and rate, prints the required carrier-compliant label, and confirms the shipment. The operator is then ready to process the next carton.

As Pet Supplies' Operation Manager observed, "Before we had to think about which carrier system to use. Now we know that Agile's solution instantly makes the right decision in one consistent process".

Results

Customers now have the ability to monitor their deliveries on-line. This not only improves customer service, but it also reduces inbound calls while improving traffic to Pet Supplies' web site thereby increasing the likelihood of additional sales. Additional benefits include faster transaction times and reduction in operating costs.



Key Benefits

- 10% reduction in operating costs
- Improved shipping efficiency
- Improved customer service
- Reduced errors and training time
- Improved visibility and control

According to their Operation's Manager, "From an operational perspective, the biggest benefit has been total order visibility. Prior to implementing Agile's solution our shipping processes were fragmented and not integrated into our WMS system. Visibility stopped at order picking. Today we have complete visibility from order placement to final delivery, which translates into better service."

Future

With smaller and more frequent store distributions, shipments to customers directly from stores, and shipments between stores, Pet Supplies is collaborating with Agile/Pacific on solutions to expand automation and control of these processes across all locations. Whatever their needs, Pet Supplies is very confident that Agile/Pacific has the experience, expertise and technology to deliver.

For more information:

Agile-Network

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