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20 Most Promising Food and Beverage Technology Solution Providers 2014

Food and Beverage industry is embracing multiple sides of the technology value chain to bring in huge savings by adopting differentiated strategies and technology investment priorities. The technology trends highlight an industry in transition. Digital logistics and the increased cloud adoption has emerged as the core drivers for minimized costs and increased efficiencies, which is of paramount importance for the sector. The software applications in areas like supply chain, inventory management, forecasting, compliance, food safety, transportation, and marketing are driving various gains in association with new technology providers and logistics service providers.

Within the food and beverage industry, companies often rely on complex processes and the best automation and control technologies are always high on demand. The various automation software bridges the gap between the management, production lines and supply chains to increase productivity and reduce time-to-market.

Sustaining transformation starts with initiatives and tracking the outcomes. Our research identified the companies that leverage their products and solutions to realize the true potential of the global food and beverage industry. In order to present a 360 degree view of the software acceleration in the food and beverage sector, we sought out views from a distinguished panel of CEOs, CIOs, VCs, industry analysts, and the editorial board of CIO Review to select the final 20 companies that are at the forefront for tackling today's challenge in the Food and Beverage landscape.

As a prelude to CIO Review's 20 Most Promising Food and Beverage Solution Providers 2014, our selection panel evaluated the capabilities of hundreds of vendors in this space who have tailored systems, services, and skill sets to propel the technology momentum. The companies featured here highlighted an in-depth expertise in delivering integrated and innovative technologies to streamline operations and be the critical cog in the evolving food and beverage ecosystem. We present to you CIO Review's 20 Most Promising Food and Beverage Technology Solution Providers 2014.



Company:

ProCat Distribution Technologies

Description:

A company that develops, licenses and supports warehouse solutions for distribution centers.

Key Person:

Steve Stomel
CEO

Website:

www.procatdt.com

ProCat Distribution Technologies Providing Picking, Loading, Shipping and Receiving Solutions for Distribution Centers

Being an industry veteran with over three decades of experience in managing distribution centers, Steve Stomel was moved by the challenges that distribution companies faced attempting to achieve higher accuracy rates and productivity in the fulfillment of customer orders. Combining next generation software with the latest technology, Steve established ProCat Distribution Technologies to help distribution companies meet those challenges.

"I firmly believe there is nothing you can do that will have a bigger impact on your distribution process than improving your picking process, which is your core functionality," says Steve. Shrinking warehouse budgets, rapidly increasing SKU's along with warehouse customer's demands for personalization are requiring unique solutions. "What today's warehousing operations need are solutions that respond rapidly with customized options that fit their supply chain process," Steve continues. ProCat Distribution Technologies addresses these issues. From receiving and stocking to picking, loading and delivery, ProCat has developed a complete line of cost effective turnkey solutions. Incorporating hands-free operations with non-proprietary equipment, ProCat utilizes scanning technology to ensure virtually 100 percent accuracy of each step along the way. Not only does this scanning technology provide the accuracy required, but it also collects a wealth of data for management control, tracking, and reporting.

PickRight is one of the core offerings from ProCat, consisting of a wrist-worn touch screen PC and ring scanner. The hands-free picking solution has customizable features that can be used to meet the ever-increasing demands for individualized order fulfillment as well as collecting data for growing government regulations. PickRight uses affordable, non-proprietary, rugged hands-free hardware. PickRight's display provides quick, at-a-glance visual information, and a rich feature set that is unavailable in traditional voice systems. The on-screen picker productivity option affords immediate feedback to keep the pickers on target with their expected pick rates. Item color-coding provides customized highlights and enhances the visual display for rapid


response. Features such as, substitute items offer customization for unique individual order requirements.

Case in point, Andalusia Distributing Co. (ADC) in Alabama was experiencing picking errors, incorrect order quantities and picker productivity issues which directly hurt their bottom

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line. They needed a picking program that would improve their order accuracy and efficiency as well as provide a good return on investment. Since implementing PickRight, ADC's picking errors, productivity problems as well as training issues were no longer hindering its operation. Weekly picking errors were greatly reduced to an average of one per 120,000 pieces picked.

Along with the numerous features and benefits, PickRight does not require a Warehouse Management System (WMS) in order for it to operate. "If you can print a pick ticket," states Steve, "then you are more than likely ready for PickRight!" Implementation usually takes place within 8 weeks from the time the customer commits, with installation itself usually taking less than a week. Finally, the return on investment is usually less than one year.

Moving forward, ProCat continues to listen to its customers and develop software solutions that will help them stay ahead of the curve. "Our roadmap is to continue to bring our solutions and technologies to as many distribution centers as we can," says Steve. LoadRight, ShipRight, ReceiveRight, ReturnRight, WeighRight, and StockRight are some of the other key offerings of ProCat that were developed with customer input. "We currently operate in almost 100 warehouses across the U.S. and strive to continue to grow our customer base by helping them meet their distribution challenges," he concludes. 



Steve Stomel