

CASE STUDY

Voice expands labor pool for global headwear company

Dorfman Pacific: Voice directed work exceeds expectations



Global headwear and handbag company, Dorfman Pacific, had an exceptional experience implementing Infios voice directed work into their outbound picking process.

About Dorfman Pacific

Founded in 1921 to offer quality headwear products with a commitment to strong service, Dorfman Pacific has become one of the largest headwear and handbag companies in the world. What began as Dorfman Hat & Cap Company in a 5,000 square foot facility in Oakland, California developed into Dorfman Pacific at their new 300,000 square foot headquarters in Stockton, California. With over 100 years of experience, Dorfman has continuously changed to keep up with their customers' headwear needs while maintaining their commitment to customer service, on-time deliveries and product quality.

Dorfman's warehouse in Stockton, California ships nearly 1.5 million boxes per year to retailers like Macy's and Bass Pro. Aside from their own brand of hats, popular headwear brands distributed and licensed by Dorfman Pacific are Indiana Jones, Tommy Bahama and Stetson.

At a glance

Project goals

- Increase picking efficiency
- Fulfill orders faster and in a 24-hour period
- Reduce training time

Solution

- Voice-directed work

Features and benefits

- 99 percent accuracy
- Reduced picking head count by 8 people
- Reached ROI in six months

Challenges

Dorfman desired to have a more efficient operation, identifying the need to get orders out quicker and faster. In order to achieve this, the headwear company set a goal of getting everything out of the warehouse in a 24-hour period.

A significant bottleneck in their warehouse was availability of labor. Handling 6,500+ SKUs efficiently and in a timely manner became a hard task to complete, impacting Dorfman's ability to keep up with demand without 12 to 15 additional temporary employees on hand throughout the building.

Solutions

With a large quantity of SKUs handled in the Stockton warehouse, Dorfman desired to introduce voice into their picking process. After visiting a customer using Infios voice, Dorfman knew this was the solution to help them reach their efficiency and time-to-ship goals.

Voice was initially implemented into Dorfman Pacific's outbound picking process. After a huge success, the headwear company decided voice would also be utilized for interleaved cycle counts and put-away.



"The implementation that we had was fabulous, it was great ... everything went as smooth as possible."

Red Jensen

Inbound Distribution Manager

Results

After a quick implementation, Dorfman Pacific saw incredible and unexpected results. The company achieved their ROI in only 6 months.

Efficiency and accuracy

The addition of voice in outbound picking increased accuracy by 99 percent. The hands-free solution helped Dorfman achieve their goal of increased efficiency as pick times were significantly reduced, making it easier for employees to do their jobs.

The amount of time and employees needed to train new hires was also reduced, contributing to the improved efficiency levels. Previously, with RF, one or two employees could be trained at a time. This method limited the ability for the company to get new employees up to speed, and took significant time away from managers. Voice is set up to make training easier, shortly after receiving instructions, new hires would put on a headset and get to work.



"The most compelling part of voice is pick times: we were able to reduce our head count by eight people. It also increased our efficiencies and our accuracy rate."

Michael Johnson

Outbound Distribution Manager

Labor

In addition to the improvements of picking efficiency, Dorfman saw positive improvements in their workforce challenges by implementing voice. The number of temps working throughout the building reduced from 12-15 to only 2 or 3 at a time. As a result, the outbound picking group dropped from 28 to 18 people. Thanks to voice, Dorfman was able to pick at faster speeds, and meet their productivity goals, with a much smaller crew.

The multilingual feature of voice helped Dorfman Pacific expand their labor pool. Offering languages like Spanish gave Dorfman the ability to hire employees who spoke English as a second language. The materials handling picking team has a diverse group, including people from Mexico, Cambodia, America and the Philippines.



"Voice helped a lot because it's in Spanish and English ... in today's labor market there are challenges of finding people that are willing to work and have the ability to work. Having voice that is adaptable to multiple languages increases the labor pool."

Adriana Aceves

Floor Supervisor, Material Handling

While voice benefited labor efficiency and opportunity, the solution also increased employees' quality of life working for Dorfman Pacific. The addition of voice has made employees extremely happy because their jobs became a lot quicker and easier. Training became a simple process, which made the experience easier on managers and new employees.