

Furtex Limited Scales their Family-owned Business with RF-SMART

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Completing 25% more orders without increasing headcount

RF-SMART cycle counts eliminated annual physical stock counts

Furtex Limited is a manufacturer and wholesaler of high-end soft furnishings. A fourth generation, family owned business, Furtex takes pride in its growing business. But with that growth came a complicated set of transactions, including in-bound global sourcing and lot control of serialized items. Furtex moved to NetSuite to leverage a cloud-based ERP. However, poor control and visibility of their stock in NetSuite challenged them to search for a mobile solution to enable better inventory control.

CHALLENGES OF A GROWING COMPANY

“As we were growing, our distribution was struggling in terms of storage, and our poor visibility into our stock slowed our operations down,” said Sonny Dhesi, Head of Operations and ICT. With these factors impacting sales, operations and customer service, Sonny began looking for better ways to manage their inventory and improve efficiency. With previous experience in logistics and lean operations – as well as experience with top tier solutions – Sonny evaluated several inventory management solutions.

Sonny knew that with Furtex’s complicated requirements finding a solution out-of-the-box would be difficult, but based on a recommendation from NetSuite, Sonny looked

at RF-SMART. Through a demo and customer reference, Sonny was able to see RF-SMART in action: “The discovery process showed me features of RF-SMART that I could see easily fitting into my organization.”

SCALABLE FUNCTIONALITY THAT “HELPS US WORK SMARTER”

Bin Transfers - The team at Furtex uses RF-SMART to scan items at receipt, prompt for putaway and then to pick orders. In addition, RF-SMART’s bin transfer functionality has been very useful. “Previously, one of our biggest challenges was moving an entire bin to another physical location, which required scanning every item,” said Sonny. Bin Transfer All allows employees to scan just once to complete the job, and Bin Transfer Serial is

important for their serialized items. This gives Furtex lot control to properly manage the varying shelf life amounts of their products.

Cross Docking - Because they presale some of their items, Furtex needed functionality to increase efficiency for cross docking. Using RF-SMART at receipt, Furtex employees now know which items should be put away in the preferred bin (which flows into the picking module for added efficiency), or which items should be scanned to the holding bay. "RF-SMART ties it all in together, seamlessly," said Sonny. "With just one scan at receiving, my employees are ticking a lot of tasks off. That's where we are seeing a lot of efficiency."

Cycle Counting - "Cycle count functionality with RF-SMART has eradicated the need for annual stock counts," said Sonny. By scheduling weekly and monthly cycle count targets, Sonny can monitor how often inventory is being counted and focus on the big-ticket items. Furtex categorizes their inventory based on highest impact, and cycle counting allows them to more frequently count the high impact items, while only occasionally counting the slower moving items. With effortless management of this process using RF-SMART, Furtex now has confidence that the inventory on the floor matches what was in NetSuite.

Labeling - Functionality such as labeling and pre-loaded images are improving quality and saving time. Printing packing slips while printing pick slips saves trips to the printer, as does printing labels from their handheld devices. In addition, thumbnail product images displayed on the devices helps pickers find the correct product faster. "RF-SMART helps us work smarter," said Sonny. "Employees are saving time and effort, and every minute we can save on a task adds up over multiple employees, which multiplies over the course of the week, month and year."

Kitting - Because kits don't carry stock in NetSuite, Furtex was experiencing picking inefficiencies with items for their kits, where some items might be in stock, but others were not. With no way to distinguish this in NetSuite, RF-SMART provided a solution. "We configured RF-SMART so that it prompts users to only pick items for kits when we have all the parts available, so that it's ready to ship out immediately," said Sonny.

Work Orders & Assembly Builds - With a successful first phase implementation, Furtex has plans to add more manufacturing functionality, including RF-SMART's Work Order module so that they can include lot numbers at receiving. Lot numbers will be the first step to implementing Assembly Builds, which will provide visibility into raw materials, help control waste, and allow Furtex to create finished goods. These will show as available stock, and the sales team will have visibility into this. "There's a gap between receiving raw materials and selling finished goods, and Assembly Builds is the middle piece that we're currently missing," said Sonny.


RESULTS: MEASURABLE IMPROVEMENTS

Before implementing RF-SMART, managing their inventory via paper processes resulted in inefficiency and wasted time. By using RF-SMART for completing picks and following the prompts on the handheld devices, pickers now go to the correct location every time, and Sonny has real-time visibility into their movements and inventory changes. "Using RF-SMART, our on-time picks have increased from 73% to 99%, and we're now completing 25% more orders - increasing productivity without increasing headcount," said Sonny.

In addition, the reporting offered in RF-SMART is starting to build increased efficiencies for Furtex. "My dashboard provides KPIs on many things we previously had no visibility into," said Sonny. This includes how much work his team has done and what is pending - from detailed purchase orders of inbound stock to how many replenishments his team needs to complete. "RF-SMART enables us to have synchronization of our movements and the system. It keeps us aligned and in real-time," said Sonny.

LOCAL TRAINING TO CONTINUE GROWING

"The RF-SMART implementation team was really good at understanding what we needed and grasping our business model," said Sonny. With their understanding of NetSuite and warehousing, RF-SMART provided a seamless experience for Sonny.

Training and additional support has also been successful. Furtex takes advantage of the monthly training topics offered by RF-SMART Customer Care to broaden their knowledge and understanding of mobile best practices. For a New Zealand-based operation, finding support available in their time zone has been an unexpected value-add. "I have nothing but good things to say about the RF-SMART support team," said Sonny. "There is always someone there to help me out." 

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