



99 Cents Only Stores

Discount Retailer Drives Expansion With Solutions From HighJump Software

Company Profile—99 Cents Only Stores

99 Cents Only Stores is the nation's oldest existing one-price retailer. The company emphasizes name-brand consumables at an affordable, single price point in its 251 attractively merchandised stores located in California, Nevada, Arizona and Texas.

Challenge

In 2003, 99 Cents Only Stores purchased a 750,000-square-foot distribution center near Houston to serve its strong entrance into the Texas market. After deciding that the warehouse management system (WMS) running in its California distribution center would be unable to interface with all of the automated equipment in the new facility, 99 Cents Only Stores began the search for a new solution. Robust, standard functionality—especially in the area of receiving—and a high level of system adaptability headed the list of critical system requirements necessary to drive complex, high-volume operations. And the system had to be implemented quickly.

According to Robert Adams, vice president of information systems at 99 Cents Only Stores, the ability to receive incoming goods became a focal area in the selection process. "Our business model is based on a lot of opportunistic purchases. So just as our buyers have to be flexible to quickly purchase the right items, our supply chain has to be extremely flexible to support this dynamic environment," he said.

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-Robert Adams,
VP of information systems

Solution

After reviewing the offerings of major supply chain execution solution vendors, 99 Cents Only Stores selected HighJump™ Supply Chain Advantage from HighJump Software. From this comprehensive solution set 99 Cents Only Stores chose functionality for warehouse, yard and event management, as well as supply chain visibility.

According to Adams, HighJump Software's positive customer references played a major role in the decision. "I've never experienced such outstanding references in the software industry with any other vendor I have worked with over the years."

Adams was also impressed with HighJump Software's rapid and highly disciplined implementation methodology. "This was a very smooth, fast implementation," he said. "I firmly believe a computer system should never make you change your business





processes—and with HighJump Software this was a reality. First, they listened to how we needed to run our business and what made it unique. Then they put forward a controlled, proven methodology and best practices to carry out the implementation, which included minor personalization with the HighJump adaptability tools. HighJump Software lived up to and exceeded all of the expectations that had been set during our discussions with their customer references.”

99 Cents Only Stores now utilizes the HighJump Warehouse Advantage WMS for complete control of activities occurring from the time products enter the warehouse until the minute they leave. HighJump Warehouse Advantage is tightly integrated with a Voxware™ voice picking system to deliver directed, optimized work instructions to material handlers. The Voxware server receives the picking profile from HighJump Warehouse Advantage and then tells workers what to pick and where to find it. For wave picking, 99 Cents Only Stores uses the HighJump wave planning solution, which streamlines activity flow on the warehouse floor and results in more efficient truck loading.

On the material handling front, HighJump Warehouse Advantage is integrated with a three-story conveyor for label picking as well as a high-speed sortation system. Twenty lanes divert items based on their labels, and there are different lanes set up for different

stores. Once an item goes through the sorter, confirmation is sent to HighJump Warehouse Advantage, and the status changes to “picked.”

For both inbound and outbound operations, 99 Cents Only Stores utilizes the HighJump Yard Advantage yard management solution to keep track of trucks and the inventory they contain. Inventory is monitored from the time a truck checks in at the gate of the yard, and truck drivers are directed to the appropriate dock or yard location depending on the loading or unloading activity scheduled.

Throughout the fulfillment and distribution process, 99 Cents Only Stores leverages the HighJump supply chain visibility solutions. The company's retail locations utilize a Web-based portal to access information about the status of incoming shipments. The HighJump management visibility tool gives the team a high-level view of facility and worker performance. This is displayed through charts and graphics for snapshots of real-time inventory levels, order volume and order status.

99 Cents Only Stores' warehouse managers also leverage event management functionality to receive notifications of exceptions occurring throughout the supply chain. This information allows them to proactively resolve issues such as late shipments that could impact retail stores.

Results

Immediately after implementation, the HighJump system began to deliver measurable savings to 99 Cents Only Stores. Bottom-line results are critical to the discount retailer because costs cannot be passed along to the customer. “We aren't in a position where we can raise our prices,” Adams said.

99 Cents Only Stores has achieved real-time inventory control and an efficient receiving process. Adams is pleased with how the HighJump solution allows them to receive and process inbound goods. “This is where HighJump really excels with its adaptable software,” he said. “Even when we don't have any advance warning of incoming items, we still have to move them through the facility very quickly and efficiently,” Adams said. “The HighJump solutions have empowered us to do just that.”

According to Adams, after working with the system throughout the implementation process and taking training courses through HighJump University, the 99 Cents Only Stores team really feels as though it has full ownership of the system. But they know that if assistance is needed, the HighJump Software Worldwide Support team is only a phone call away.

