



Questions to Ask a Warehouse Management System Reference

Congratulations! You've made it through quite a long process of researching warehouse management systems (WMS) and narrowing down your vendor list. Now you're ready to interview customer references. How do you make sure you ask the right questions? How will you make sure you get comprehensive, real-world feedback for each solution you are considering? The set of questions below will help guide you through customer reference calls. You'll be able to determine a system's ability to not only meet the functional needs of your operation, but also to quickly and cost-effectively meet changing customer and business requirements, generate strong return on investment, and provide low total cost of ownership.

1. WMS Project Outlook

- Which vendors were finalists in your WMS selection process?
- What are the main reasons you selected this particular WMS vendor?
- How important was total cost of ownership in your vendor evaluation?

2. Implementing the System

- Was the project completed on time?
- Was the project completed within projected cost parameters?
- Was the product delivered as designed? (i.e., including the functional enhancements determined during the design phase)
- How elaborate were your enhancements? (size / cost / time)
- On a scale of 1-10, rate your overall satisfaction with the system implementation. What was the biggest factor in determining this score?
- With the knowledge you now have, what would you have done differently during the implementation?

3. Go-Live

- What approach did you take to go-live? (i.e., phased, big-bang, etc.)
- How visible and attentive was the vendor during go-live?
- Were your personnel properly trained for the go-live?
- Did any major issues arise during the go-live process?
- On a scale of 1-10, rate the go-live. What was the biggest factor in determining this score?

4. Technical / Maintenance

- How is your system administered? (i.e., Do you have a dedicated resource?)
- On what platform is your WMS system running?
(Make certain the reference site you are talking to is actually running the WMS applications on the platform your vendor is proposing.)
- How many servers are required to support your solution?

5. Upgrading the WMS

- How many upgrades of your WMS have you done?
- How long did the upgrade(s) take?
- How expensive was the upgrade?
- Were previous enhancements made specifically for your business brought forward in the upgrade or did they need to be reapplied?

6. Going Forward

- Have you added functionality to your system since the initial go-live?
- If yes, who made the enhancements?
- Have new functional requirements been identified since the go-live?
- Does your company intend to make enhancements to meet these new requirements? If so, who will perform them?

