

Large U.S. wholesale grocer switches from Vocollect to Lucas Systems for big gains



A large food wholesaler in the United States, serving more than 1,000 grocers across the country, with consolidated sales north of \$12 billion, was recently faced with a difficult and expensive decision on continuing with Vocollect, their legacy warehouse voice-picking solution.

The company reached out to Lucas Systems to discuss alternatives and the unique value proposition that Lucas offers. Within the four walls of the warehouse, grocery DCs represent a unique optimization challenge. Lucas understands these unique challenges and has worked with many grocery and foodservice distribution companies over their 25-year history to solve challenges including SKU proliferation, escalating customer demands for availability, accuracy, and shorter delivery windows, as well as dealing with the complexities of creating the most optimum pallets to elevate selector efficiency and speed.



So much more than voice-directed picking

The wholesale grocery distributor realized that to continue on their aggressive progression and service excellence trajectory, they needed the next level of dynamic functionality and scalability. As discussions progressed with Lucas, they uncovered that to handle the specific demands of grocery distribution, including high volume and accuracy, complex pick to pallet operations, and high on-floor worker travel burdens, Lucas offered a unique solution that no one else in the industry could. Specifically, the Lucas Dynamic Work Optimization solution delivered exclusive features including:



Flexible, customer directed hardware and UI experiences

Lucas's intelligent mobile applications seamlessly integrate AI and a large selection of Android hardware choices featuring a wide variety of multi-modal input and output technologies, including certified scanning, voice, and touchscreens, to deliver an enhanced user experience. These devices require no voice training, offer multiple languages, and can also serve other purposes when not in use for picking tasks, such as cycle counts, receiving, replenishment, or any other application.

Intelligent pallet matching

Lucas employs its AI-powered software, Jennifer™, to leverage order, inventory, and location data from various systems, using AI algorithms to generate efficient assignments. Unlike basic route-based pallet sequencing found in typical WMS systems, Jennifer™ takes into account factors such as order importance, pick location, on-floor worker travel, product characteristics, and more to formulate the most effective multi-pallet tasks. Jennifer™ sifts through millions of potential combinations to identify the optimal grouping of work among the available pallets.

In this case, the customer was able to advance their pallet matching from picking on double pallet jacks to a single store to picking to multiple stores using A/B pallets. Not only did this boost pick efficiency, but the customer also saw an increase in accuracy compared to when they were picking to a single store.

Path optimization

Traditional picking systems follow a straightforward path, guiding workers through aisles in a linear pattern. In contrast, Jennifer™ path optimization algorithms employ a virtual facility map to calculate an optimal route, which doesn't adhere to a rigid location sequence. These algorithms consider various factors, such as the user's starting and ending points, aisle restrictions (like one-way aisles), and more.

Game-changing expectations in productivity and savings

With its rich out of the box functionality, configurable to meet customer requirements, standard interfaces to import and export data and reduced implementation time, Dynamic Work Optimization has delivered impactful results including:



8%

labor reduction



18%

on-floor worker
travel time reduction



\$5M

saved annually

Just as important, Lucas offers the ability to upgrade to newer Lucas-certified Android devices without changing applications and with minimal services required. Accessories and peripherals also are available on the open market which ensures flexibility, scalability and cost-effectiveness.

With fierce competition only expected to intensify, the grocery wholesaler has committed to expand technology throughout their supply network. Some instances will be retrofitting existing operations, and others will be new construction projects for expansion or replacements, but all will share the same goal of accelerating transformation based on customer needs and capital access. Gaining maximum value from their investments will be absolutely critical to continued success, and implementing solutions such as Lucas Dynamic Work Optimization will ensure an optimized mix of cost, quality and outcomes.

Lucas Systems helps companies transform their distribution center operations and continuously adapt to changing market dynamics. We dramatically increase worker productivity, operational agility, and customer satisfaction. Our solutions are built on 25+ years of deep process expertise and smart software using AI and voice technologies. Our solutions feature Jennifer™, the brain, voice, and orchestration engine that drives performance improvement gains. Make the smartest moves at the lowest cost with Jennifer™.

