

Growing the Brand with Advanced Ecommerce Order Fulfillment



BW Retail Solutions, an ecommerce retailer specializing in the power sports and lawn and garden industries, accelerated and streamlined its fulfillment workflow with the combined Descartes Peoplevox™ ecommerce warehouse management system (WMS) and Descartes ShipRush™ multi-carrier ecommerce parcel shipping solution, dramatically increasing fulfillment throughput with fewer employees while improving accuracy and managing peak season with ease.

“To meet the demands of the modern consumer, data and efficiency are everything. The automated Descartes WMS and shipping solution transformed our fulfillment operations through an exponentially faster pick-pack-ship process, granular performance data, and reduced labor costs.”

Chris Ball, CEO,
BW Retail Solutions

Company Profile

BW Retail Solutions

Descartes Solutions

Descartes Peoplevox™

Descartes ShipRush™

About the Client

Founded in 2017 in metro Detroit, MI, BW Retail Solutions is an industry leader in end-to-end ecommerce retail brand management and operational logistics. From sourcing, storing, sales and every step in between, BW Retail provides services for modern brands to thrive in an online world.

Quick Overview

Challenge

Manual Fulfillment Thwarts Growth

Solution

Ecommerce Fulfillment Automation
Boosts Pick-Pack-Ship Productivity

Results

- 45%-60% Greater Labor Efficiency
- Warehouse KPI Performance
- Scaling Ecommerce Growth
- Simplified WMS Training & Onboarding

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Challenge: Manual Fulfillment Thwarts Growth

Growing 30%-40% per year, BW Retail Solutions ships more than one million orders (OEM and its own products) annually through eBay, Amazon, Walmart, and its own websites via warehouses in Michigan, Georgia, and Ontario, Canada. The ecommerce retailer's existing manual, paper-based order fulfillment practices were time-consuming, labor-intensive, and unable to scale to support its aggressive growth. BW Retail needed a user-friendly, scalable warehouse management system and shipping solution that could streamline the pick-pack-ship workflow to boost productivity, reduce labor costs, and improve order accuracy to enhance the customer experience.

Solution: Ecommerce Fulfillment Automation Boosts Pick-Pack-Ship Productivity

Faced with fulfillment bottlenecks, BW Retail Solutions deployed the combined Descartes Peoplevox and Descartes ShipRush solution—integrated with its proprietary ERP and ChannelAdvisor (now Rithum)—to manage its rapidly expanding sales growth.

"We found that the inefficiency of printing things on paper and operating the way we did as a small company just wasn't scaling," said Eric Hessel, COO at BW Retail. "And as our SKU count grew, it became too difficult to organize our inventories and impossible to train staff quickly."

The Descartes solution helped BW Retail realize a 45%-60% improvement in labor efficiency, increasing both pick productivity and accuracy via ecommerce fulfillment automation. "Before we rolled out the system at our Canadian warehouse, they had three shifts and 30+ employees on the floor," said John White, Director of Warehouse Operations at BW Retail. "Now, they only need one shift with 16 people—and the throughput and productivity is four times as much."

"Plus, in our old system, we had someone selecting carriers and service rates for every single package," said Karl Hessel, Director of Digital Information at BW Retail. "By taking advantage of the automation rules and carrier rate and service selection tools in Descartes ShipRush, we eliminated that role from the warehouse and reallocated those resources to other positions."

The Descartes solution also helps BW Retail easily flex seasonal labor to manage peak volume spikes and train new employees quickly to reduce labor costs. "May is our biggest month of year; it's our Christmas, our Super Bowl. With Peoplevox, we can train employees in a matter of hours, instead of days, weeks, or even months," noted White. "On day one, they're picking, packing, and shipping—and that is awesome because there's a cost behind that learning curve of training people."

"Peoplevox has also greatly improved our reporting. Previously, we didn't have a way to determine who picked which order, who shipped which order, or how many orders each person picked in a day," said Hessel. "With Descartes, we have 'per employee' performance and operational metrics that we can tie to company goals to track and evaluate progress."

Results:



45%-60% Greater Labor Efficiency

The Descartes solution allowed BW Retail to cut in half the number of employees required to pick orders, and to eliminate the role of selecting carriers and service rates, reallocating those resources to other functions.



Warehouse KPI Performance

With detailed reports and comprehensive "per employee" metrics, the Descartes solution provides accurate, KPI-driven insights to help BW Retail improve warehouse performance and profitability, while enhancing short-term decision-making and long-term planning.



Simplified Onboarding

Using the Descartes solution, BW Retail dramatically reduced the learning curve for picking, packing, and shipping; new employees are fully trained and operational within hours instead of days or weeks.



Scaling Ecommerce Growth

With seamless integration to ChannelAdvisor (now Rithum) and quick training of seasonal employees, the Descartes WMS scales easily to manage peak season while supporting 30%-40% annual ecommerce sales growth.