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New Research Report: "What To Look for in WMS Software"

SEARCHING FOR A WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

Finding the best WMS is the mission of this report. This research report educates on the common differences and deficiencies found in WMS software today. Functional areas are covered in detail. The report is written in normal English, avoids computer jargon, and focusses on the following areas :

- Understanding common differences in WMS software.
- Understanding common missing functions in WMS software.
- Building a strong RFP and why this is so important.
- Explanation of the steps in the selection process.
- Tips on saving money in the selection process & in negotiations.

Chapter One - Common Differences Among WMS Products

Our first goal is to delineate the key differentiators among packages. This is what separates the contenders from the pretenders. Not all WMS are created equal. There is a wide variety of functionality in warehouse management systems. When a WMS vendor says he does a specific function, such as cubing, is it done properly and completely?

Chapter 1 covers twenty differentiators **in detail**, such as:

- Volumetric differences
- Bin Locator System differences
- Automatic Picking Release differences
- Much more...

Chapter Two - Common Deficiencies in WMS Products

Our second purpose is to point out the common deficiencies are among the WMS industry. This has happened because the WMS packages have focused primarily on inventory movement within the warehouse. Even the better WMS packages will have deficiencies, missing some items as error analysis, labor productivity standard reporting, hazardous material, trailer tracking, etc.

Chapter 2 covers many common deficiencies **in detail**, such as:

- Document Imaging Interface for MSDS, CERT, and Engineering Diagrams...
- Hazard Material (HazMat) Automation
- Dynamic Slotting
- Interfaces to Host System
- Interfaces to Material Handling
- Interfaces to Other Software utilized in the warehouse
- Much more...

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Chapter Three - Build A Request For Information (RFI)

The third purpose of this research report is to encourage one to develop a Request For Information (RFI) or Request for Proposal (RFP). With minimal expense, one may send an RFI to the WMS vendors and get detailed responses as to what their product does and does not do. A sample RFI including all differentiators and deficiencies is found in Chapter 3. One is reminded to also include basic requirements (such as internalization, part number size, and so forth) in the RFI. It should be tailored to the company's needs and sent out.

Once the RFI responses have been analyzed, then one may eliminate all vendors that lack any one of the required functions. This results in the short list of vendors with whom to go into a more expensive evaluation process of demonstrations, site visits, detailed functionality reviews, negotiations, and contracts.

Chapter three also indicates how to discern completed RFI's, score each WMS solution, and produce management summaries. Management summaries include a cost summary and a functional strength analysis. With the knowledge given in the first two chapters, and the examples in chapter three, the selection team may feel confident about building a solid RFI and evaluating solutions.

Appendix A - WMS Solution Listing

The WMS solution listing is in two parts, as companies are focused on either obtaining a stand-alone solution, or a solution that is part of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution. The first part has standalone WMS vendors with their solutions. The second part has ERP Vendors with their solutions (that include a WMS or Warehouse module).

Appendix B - Related Software Solution Listing

WMS are highly connected to other types of software. Software solutions that are commonly connected to the WMS are listed.

- Shipping Manifest Systems
- Load Building Optimization
- Route Optimization
- Warehouse Simulation
- Slotting Optimization
- Labor Management
- Yard Management
- Transportation Management Systems

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Selection Process Steps

This research report guides you through the following seven steps from learning about WMS software to final selection of a WMS package.

- **1 - LEARN.** Understand WMS differences and common missing functions. *Use the book! Chapters 1 and 2.* Tap into consultants as needed.
- **2 - BUILD RFI.** Based on WMS knowledge and company practices, build a well thought out RFI and send it to all WMS vendors. *A sample RFI is in the book!*
- **3 - GATHER RESULTS.** Enter RFI results into spreadsheet. Challenge vendors on unusual responses to make fair comparison. Now, have a valuable (1) functionality comparison and (2) cost comparison.
- **4 - DETERMINE FINALISTS.** Eliminate all WMS solutions that do NOT have essential functionality. Others may be eliminated on company specific requirements. Call finalists for on-site demonstrations.
- **5 - DEMOS & SITE VISITS.** Arrange demonstration of WMS solution with your products. Indicate important areas that must be demonstrated. AFTER demonstration, visit 2 or 3 warehouses that are using the WMS. Insist on warehouses that are similar in operation, volumes, and size to your operations.
- **6 - RECALCULATE FINAL COSTS.** Make sure all computer hardware, software, maintenance fees, support, installation, and other costs are updated in the cost comparison. Have vendors recalculate cost proposals if necessary. Discuss with team who the #1 and #2 WMS choices are. Make written offer to #1. Fall back to #2 choice if necessary.
- **7 - SIGN CONTRACTS - START INSTALLATION PROCESS.** With all large computer installations, it takes dedicated staff and a key individual to drive it to successful implementation. It is a wise idea to do a pilot project, so that the expected and agreed upon procedures can be modeled & changed repetitively before "going live" with the full warehouse.

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Target Audience

This publication is intended for those who are searching for software known as a Warehouse Management System (WMS) and have a good, working knowledge of *either* warehouse operations *or* computer systems. The writing within this publication assumes the reader understands the basics of warehousing and goes right into the core issues, including what key functionality makes a better WMS and what is missing in most WMS today. By getting an up-to-date view on where the WMS market is today, one may have confidence in asking precise questions and knowing what one is investing in.

Benefits

With the knowledge found in our research report and a RFI to quickly find a short list of possible WMS packages for in-depth review, our mission of assisting in finding the best WMS package is accomplished. In addition, *by eliminating the weaker WMS solutions early on in the process via a strong RFI, one has saved significant amounts of time and money* (and those WMS vendors have saved significant expenses).

A thorough list of WMS solutions is available. IDII has done an exhaustive search of vendors in North America. This will enhance a searcher's effort with such details as company name, address, and phone numbers, contact person, e-mail, fax, and web-site address. To further enhance a searcher's effort, related software solutions are listed. These are provided so that the search team can cover all the bases.

Philip Obal, President of Industrial Data & Information, says, "**A company can save significant time and money in the selection of a WMS process by doing two things. First, educate yourself in the common differences and deficiencies in the WMS market today. Second, have a precise RFI (request for information) that really represents the company's requirements.** By doing both of these things early on in the search process, you will avoid unnecessary exploratory trips for learning at both the company and vendors' expense. In addition, you will end up with a WMS solution meeting your needs."

IDII has both standard WMS RFI and an advanced WMS RFI products. The standard WMS RFI has approximately 300 detailed questions, while the advanced WMS RFI has approximately 700 questions. These are available as separate products. See our fact sheet on the WMS RFI products at our website at www.idii.com.

Consider the large investment that is involved in a new WMS (ranging from \$100,000 to \$5,000,000). Our products have a tremendous amount of information. The research report, RFI, and the WMS software directory will jump-start you down the fast track. Many consulting groups and supply chain companies have purchased this report and RFIs for their personnel. Get equipped now!

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Call Order In:
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Fax to (918) 464-2221

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Webbers Falls, OK 74470

1-Ordered By

2-Ship To Address

Is shipping address the same? Yes No

Company Name

Company Name

Mr. Mrs. Ms. First Name MI Last Name

Mr. Mrs. Ms. First Name MI Last Name

Title/Position

Title/Position

Address

Address

City State Zip

City State Zip

Phone Country

Phone Country

How did you find us? _____

E-mail Address

3 - Indicate Product Quantity and Extended Total Amounts

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
Warehouse & Logistics Software Directory - Single Copy		95.00	
Warehouse & Logistics Software Directory - Annual Subscription		195.00	
Report: What To Look For In WMS Software		125.00	
Standard WMS Bundle - Great Value! Includes (1) What To Look For In WMS Software, (1) Standard WMS RFI, and (1) Warehouse & Logistics Software Directory		795.00	
Advanced WMS Bundle - Best Buy! Includes (3) What To Look For In WMS Software, (1) Advanced WMS RFI, and (1) Warehouse & Logistics Software Directory		1295.00	
Electronic RFI Questions: Standard WMS RFI in Excel Format		595.00	
Advanced WMS RFI in Excel Format		995.00	
Advanced TMS RFI in Excel Format		995.00	

4. Select Delivery Method, Tax, & Total

5. Indicate Method Of Payment

- VISA
- MasterCard
- American Express
- Check/Money Order

Credit Card Number

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Expiration Date Month ____ Year ____

Card Holder's Name _____

Signature _____

Select Ground Delivery & Processing (\$8 in USA, \$15 out of USA)	
OR Overnight Delivery & Processing (\$20 in USA, \$40 out of USA)	
Sales Tax (Oklahoma Customers Only) (OK Sales Tax Rate is 4.5%)	
Total US Funds Only	