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Successful Integration Between SAP ECC & 3PL

R121 consultants implemented a solution to dramatically improve efficiencies in communication between SAP and a 3rd party WMS which reduced cost on unnecessary freight when customers made changes to their orders.

Client Overview

Benjamin Moore is a high-quality paint manufacturer that operates in 24 countries, has more than 2,500 employees, and has annual revenues exceeding $1 billion.

Technical / Business Challenge

The organization needed a way to better track orders and delivery, as well as to clean up the sales related interfaces between SAP, ECC, and their 3rd party WMS. The "as-is" state involved 25-30 IDOCs per day which was causing operational inefficiencies. The company was losing money on unnecessary freight costs as well as time wasted researching issues and manually correcting system errors.

Solution

R121 consultants first analyzed the way the two systems were communicating with each other and then corrected the sequence in which events were triggered. They leveraged SAP batch programs to eliminate the locking of various delivery documents. They made improvements to user exits that were called by IDOCs and developed a custom tool to create sales orders in SAP that would automatically drop the delivery data into the WMS. Finally, our consultants documented and delivered training materials to ensure user adoption and optimization were successful.

A new process was implemented that triggered the picking/shipping/delivery cancellation in the WMS, directly from SAP, whenever a customer made a change to an order. The project was successfully completed in four months and involved collaboration from cross-functional teams from IT, Sales, Customer Service, and the Warehouse collaborating on the solution.

Business Results

— Volume of IDOCs decreased from 500 per month to 3 per month.

— Significantly reduced shipping costs as customers no longer receive two shipments, the warehouse no longer fulfills cancelled orders, and the freight costs associated with unnecessary deliveries and reverse logistics have been eliminated.

— More product is available to promise for orders with other customers.