



success story

LORENZ & JONES
Ankeny, Iowa

Lorenz & Jones uses Latitude Manifest & Shipping System to ship their products, efficiently and safely, around the country.

Shipping Pains? Ease them with Latitude Manifest & Shipping System

Lorenz & Jones is a distributor of marine and power sports products based in Iowa with warehouses in Iowa and California. When they needed a shipping system that could simplify the way they send orders to customers around the world, they turned to Latitude Manifest and Shipping System.

In addition to shipping marine and power sports products to brick and motor retailers, Lorenz & Jones provides fulfillment services for a number of web-based retailers. Lorenz & Jones uses Latitude Manifest and Shipping System to ship their products, efficiently and safely, around the country. In addition, they used Latitude Warehouse Management System to receive, pick, and manage inventory within their warehouse facilities.

Pain Point: Precision with hazmat shipping

Some of the products that Lorenz & Jones ships are classified hazardous materials, like acid based cleaners that are used to clean boat hulls. As anyone who has ever shipped hazardous materials knows, it's not an easy job to complete manually. "The information on hazmat paperwork has to be filled out per very specific specifications that are set by the department of transportation," explains Lorenz. "This is difficult to do in a world of manual shipments; even a misspelling or missed punctuation will violate the very specific documentation requirements and cause the shipment to be rejected by the carrier." Filling out hazmat paperwork and being certain that every i is dotted, every t is crossed, and every hyphen is correct by hand? That's not just time consuming, that's a recipe for disaster, especially when you ship the volume of goods that Lorenz & Jones does.

Solution: Hazmat shipping with Latitude Manifest & Shipping System

Fortunately, Latitude allows you to classify hazardous products according to documentation requirements. When a hazardous package is processed through the manifest LMS prints the required hazardous materials documentation and labels according to specifications – the same way, every time. More than quality assurance, this saves time – hours every week.

Pain Point: e-Fulfillment

Like many suppliers, Lorenz & Jones fulfills orders on behalf of Internet retailers. To be an e-fulfillment supplier, you need the kind of technology that lets you fill orders quickly, accurately, and anonymously. "When we ship orders on behalf of web-based companies, the products go straight from us to the customer," says Lorenz, "We strive to be anonymous in the transaction. We want the consumer to assume the product came from the internet retailer's own warehouse." Keeping the entire fulfillment process hidden creates a seamless buying experience for the customer; shipping times can be faster, and the customer never knows the difference, assuming that a fulfillment specialist has the technology to automate the process of receiving orders and shipping goods as though they represent the web-based retailer.

Solution: Latitude e-Fulfillment

Latitude Manifest System provides e-fulfillment capabilities, letting Lorenz & Jones ship products as though those products came directly from the internet retailer. Packing slips and labels are printed with the internet retailers' logos and name – only the return shipping address belongs to Lorenz & Jones. Lorenz & Jones began providing e-fulfillment services once they implemented Latitude WMS, a full-fledge warehouse management system that integrates with ERP systems and a variety of manifesting solutions.

“Without a WMS, there’s no way that we could have been in e-fulfillment,” Lorenz says. You have to have a kind of speed and accuracy that’s just not possible in a manual paper based warehouse.” Although Latitude WMS helped Lorenz & Jones land a number of fulfillment accounts with internet retailers, it was the arrival of Latitude Manifest System that finally helped provide the kind of capabilities that web-based sellers need. “You can configure Latitude Manifest to automatically send shipment information back to the retailer,” says Lorenz. “Timely transmission of the package tracking number is a must for web retailers. Web retailers can then send tracking information to their customers and everyone is kept in the loop.”

Pain Point: Missed carrier scans and human error

Lorenz & Jones ships packages with a variety of carriers. Every now and again, due to human error, a package may end up being handed off to the wrong carrier, or the carrier misses an origin scan leaving the status of the package undetermined when tracking the package. Although a shipment that misses the origin scan will eventually be scanned when it is delivered, the missing information can cause a scramble for suppliers like Lorenz & Jones.

Previously, they were unable to determine if the package was given to the wrong carrier (in which case it would be returned to the warehouse within a couple of days) or if the carrier just didn’t scan it correctly at the sorting facility (in which case, the package would still be en route to the customer and delivered in a timely fashion).

Solution: Latitude timestamps and cameras

Lorenz & Jones decided to install a camera-based surveillance system in their warehouse. It films the packing and shipping of products at the manifesting station. Now, if a package that left the warehouse doesn’t get an origin scan, Lorenz is able to use Latitude Manifest to locate the timestamp for when the package was shipped. They then look at surveillance footage to see which trailer the package was placed on by referencing that timestamp. “Missed origin scans don’t happen that often, but when they do, we can easily figure out if we need to reship the package or if we can rest assured that the package was shipped correctly and the carrier just missed the origin scan. In that case, we wait for the next scan to take place.”

Latitude Manifest & Shipping System

What other benefits does Latitude LMS offer?

Lorenz cites several advanced features.

Customizable Quality Control "We've improved our quality control during manifesting by creating a "Packed By" barcode label that is applied to the package when it is packed. When the package arrives at the Latitude manifest system, the packed-by label is scanned and associated with the person that packed the package. This allows Latitude to accumulate metrics on our order packers. Seamless Interface "We found the LMS interface to be seamless," says Lorenz, "and we like working with one vendor for all of our manifesting needs. It's also easier to train people on the LMS system, which saves us money in labor costs. Our previous manifest system took far too long to teach operators to use." Eliminate redundant data entry "We were also able to eliminate a lot of redundant data entry and possible human error. For instance, we can set up carriers like 'UPS Next Day Air Saturday Delivery' that is selected at order entry time and passed to LMS without manifest operator intervention. We can now be assured that the package will ship by the intended carrier and not have to rely on the manifest operator to note select the proper carrier like we use to. It has always been the experience of Lorenz and Jones that we were able to build up a lot of good will with our customers.

We also found that we could burn through that good will in a hurry by letting our customers down by shipping the wrong product or missing expedited shipping instructions. With the implementation of our Latitude Warehouse Management System and our Latitude Manifest and Shipping System, those problems are a thing of the past."

About PathGuide Technologies

PathGuide Technologies, Inc., a privately held company founded in 1989, is a leading provider of warehouse management and shipping solutions for small to mid-sized wholesalers and industrial distributors across North America. PathGuide's software and services help suppliers increase productivity and order accuracy, improve customer service and lower labor costs, ultimately driving greater profitability. To learn how distributors of all sizes can improve their shipping operations and warehouse management, visit www.pathguide.com.