

## WMS drives efficient parts distribution

When Toyota set up a spare parts distribution facility to support its operations in the United Kingdom, the automobile maker realized that a state-of-the-art warehouse management system (WMS) was critical to getting the right part to the right dealer when it was most needed. The 190,000 square foot warehouse in Lutterworth, U.K. holds more than 85,000 stock keeping units.

To make this happen, Toyota needed warehousing software that could automatically allocate storage locations for every incoming part according to size and frequency of demand. The Lutterworth warehouse contains separate coded "parts zones" for small, medium and large parts, and moldings.

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**Roger Davies, distribution operations manager**

The WMS that Toyota chose not only tracks parts location, but produces a tag label, which gives part details and subsequent locations. This information is scanned and transferred to the host mainframe platform. Part orders placed by individual Toyota dealers are received on the mainframe, which feeds order instructions to the warehouse.

In addition to printing pick information, the application generates shipping documents for every part required. Shipment details are uploaded to the mainframe for customer invoicing, and the software generates advice notes with order information and dispatch details.

The WMS has resulted in 99.9 percent picking accuracy even though the facility handles up to 10,000 customer orders a day, says Roger Davies, Toyota's distribution operations manager. "The software has provided us with the ability

to absorb higher volumes and throughputs, while increasing the overall efficiency of the parts supply chain," says Davies. And needless to say, dealers are getting exactly the parts they need too.

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