

CASE STUDY

Dietz & Watson



About Dietz & Watson

Dietz and Watson, founded in 1939 by talented German sausage maker Gottlieb Dietz, is renowned for producing high-quality, flavorful deli meats and artisan cheeses, adhering to old-world recipes and a commitment to quality.

Perfection and originality has been the mission for Dietz and Watson since its origin in 1939. Gottlieb Dietz, a talented young German sausage maker, had a primary goal to produce the most flavorful, highest quality deli meats in the marketplace to satisfy all customers. His old-world recipes and commitment to "quality above all," demanded nothing less than the freshest lean beef, ham, pork, turkey breast, and chicken breast. He then added only the finest all-natural spices and seasonings gathered from around the world.

Today, at Dietz and Watson, the third generation continues Gottlieb Dietz's dedication and commitment to preparing and distributing premium deli meats and artisan cheeses. It is in this relentless pursuit of excellence that they realized the need for a world class technology solution that could meet their growing distribution needs.

Dietz & Watson partnered with Black Bear Distribution, their third-party logistics provider in Delanco, New Jersey, to install Softeon's supply chain solutions. They were very impressed with Softeon's solution offering significant core (out-of-the-box) features that normally require costly enhancements to solutions from other leading vendors.

The distribution center is approximately 300,000 square feet with several different temperature controlled areas ranging from 28 to 34 degrees all the way down to freezers kept at minus 10. Having many product lines and variables to manage, Dietz & Watson wanted a strategic implementation plan that had the lowest impact on their daily operations while continuing to provide a high level of service to their customers. They decided on a phased approach of implementing one product line at a time over a period of 4 months, minimizing operational impact and reducing overall risk. This implementation strategy combined with Softeon's experienced team ensured zero downtime during the implementation.

Training and Go-Live

Softeon trained the entire staff, of approximately 100 associates, over a three week period. The entire facility went completely operational over a weekend. Mike Wiese, System Administrator and Technical Program Manager for Dietz and Watson recalled. "This was a hot transition from our home grown system. We went from moving product physically to electronically moving product." Product is received from the manufacturing facilities in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Corfu, NY. Orders were downloaded from the corporate AS400 system. Softeon developed an interface to bridge the gap in order to achieve complete real-time order and inventory synchronization.



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Wayne Henry
Senior VP of Finance and Technology



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Return on Investment

One of the main objectives of the new system was to gain efficiency throughout the facility at a justifiable cost of ownership. Prior to the implementation of Softeon's system, Dietz & Watson associates were working with a non-directed put away method. As a result, they were physically out of storage space. Black Bear Distribution installed a state of the art cold storage facility, and in conjunction with Dietz and Watson distribution, took full advantage of the technology solution. This solution drove the facility to achieve significant efficiency in supporting distribution, fulfillment, and inventory control for Dietz and Watson. In addition, they were able to achieve the same efficiency and performance for all of Black Bear Distribution's 3PL customers. Dietz & Watson went from zero visibility when operating with error-prone paper reports to 100% visibility in all aspects of their distribution operations.



This was enabled by the comprehensive capability set of Softeon's solution for end-to-end WMS processes—advanced receiving, rule-based putaway, advanced wave management, optimized pick path sequencing to real time replenishment to shipping, with full control and visibility at every process stage. During the implementation customer orders were never impacted, and today, their customers are enjoying full on-time support. Their order turnaround time was reduced by 25% from 8 hours to 6 hours. "We now have the ability to gather information and start benchmarking which takes us to another level of efficiency," said Wayne Henry, Senior Vice President of Finance and Technology.

Dietz & Watson associates quickly went from strict picking to batch picking and wave planning while maintaining full work audit trail. Their DSD (Direct to Store Distribution) shipments, which were very time consuming and labor intensive, are now shipped seamlessly and on time.

Unique Requirements

Softeon's advanced solution is 100% serialized down to the case, offering a complete tracking and trace functionality. RF technology is used for all shipping transactions and each order is tracked in real-time. The system has the ability to capture catch weights, by product, to ensure order and billing accuracy. For customers that have special requirements, such as special "sale by dates," the system handles those requirements automatically. The system fully supports any recall functionality that may be needed along with QA holds and incubation time holds. "Our people have adapted nicely from the 10 year old out of date technology. The busier we are, the faster we go and the more we get done. It is amazing," said Mike Wiese.

Customer Service

Customer Service has been enhanced with Softeon's supply chain execution solution. Previously, when a customer called with a question, an answer could not be provided at the time. Today, answers are at the fingertips of any associate. As an additional feature manufacturing has complete visibility which allows production to coordinate closely with distributors who sell and take orders for Dietz & Watson products. The system has impacted and improved their complete supply chain. Not only was the highly complicated solution installed on time, but it was a less than six month install.

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Securing the Right Partners

Transtech Consulting helped Dietz & Watson decide on a total solution offering a combination of functionality, technology, and long-term support and a relatively low cost of ownership. “We knew that Dietz & Watson needed a vendor that would give them superior customer support, because when you are talking about cold storage, down time gets expensive,” said Jim Butler, Senior Vice President, Transtech Consulting. “We wanted to make sure that the functionality was there but also wanted non-proprietary and current technology. Unfortunately, a lot of systems out there still are based on legacy programming languages and/or platforms, which we felt would not be a wise investment for our client.” The RFP was initially sent to 14 vendors. Transtech evaluated the total solution offering – functionality, technology, and customer support – from each vendor. The key decision drivers were cost of ownership, strength of the vendor, ability to complement future growth with operational efficiencies, and robust ancillary functionality. While Dietz & Watson was initially only interested in the WMS, they wanted a solution that positions them to easily integrate complementing functions in the future. The selection was narrowed down to two companies and finally Softeon was selected for their state of the art architecture, robust functionality, and customer service reputation. As significant was Softeon’s suite of robust solutions that included Order Management, Labor Management, Transportation, and Slotting, which could be easily integrated at a later time. “Softeon’s team came in and immediately rolled up their sleeves and became a member of our team. They are an example of a true partnership. The Softeon team added value with their knowledge and were always concerned about giving us superior service. It was like they were an extension of our company,” said Mike Wiese.



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Mike Wiese
System Administrator



About Softeon

Softeon is a WMS provider focused exclusively on optimizing warehouse and fulfillment operations. For over two decades now, we have been helping our customers succeed. Investing in R&D enables us to develop software to solve the most complex warehouse challenges. Softeon is laser-focused on customer results, with a 100% track record of deployment success. We believe warehouse leaders shouldn't have to settle for a one size fits all approach to technology.