Roadmap for a Successful EWM Deployment
Begin your Digital Transformation - With Confidence!

It All Starts with Assembling the Right Team

- A successful WMS implementation project requires a Systems Integration Partner with a balance of strong operational and deep technical expertise.
- Executive sponsorship and top to bottom buy-in across Operations and IT should be non-negotiable.
- A steering committee made up of cross-functional Senior Leaders, with the authority to make decisions, set direction, and keep the project moving will help ensure success.
- A Project or Program Manager that has both strong technical and warehouse operations domain knowledge is key.
- The core team must be staffed with dedicated resources, well-defined roles, as well as responsibilities. Futhermore, the WMS project must be their number one priority.
- Commited subject matter experts that understand the end-to-end warehouse operations are a must - consider pulling some of your top operatiors from their current roles and dedicating them to the project.
- A WMS Implementation includes a complex technical infrastructure footprint that requires resources from the Infrastructure, Networking, Basis, and Security teams - get their buy-in and commitment early.

Find the Right Process

- Establish a clear set of goals and objectives for the project, and ensure all team members fully understand them.
- Define and adhere to formal decision-making / issue resolution process that includes turnaround deadlines to keep things moving forward as well as avoid costly project delays.
- Use a proven WMS implementation methodology that is tailored to your specific project.
- Employ a proven Project Management Process that includes a detailed project plan aligned with the methodology, resource planning, progress reporting, risk and issues resolution processing, and formal communications.
- Measure progress in a way that has very clear indicators of issues or deliverables falling behind - catch it early and you have a good shot at correcting it before it translates into a costly schedule delay and budget overrun.
- Consider a formal enchancement approval process to ensure customizations are limited to fill gaps required to meet regulatory or legal requirements, gain a true competitive advantage, meet a critcial customer demand or that have an ROI significant enough to justify adding complexity and increased support costs for the life of the system.
- A substantial change management process that ensures the organization is ready when the new solutions are launched, and ensure any business process changes the new solution introduces is balanced with the capabilities of the organization is a huge key to success.

Design the Right Solution

- Developing a set of critical business requirements up front is a must for ensuring the right solution with the best fit is selected for your warehouse operations, helps you avoid expensive, and time consuming in-flight change requests.

- A solution design must start with an operations focus and also align where needed to the capabilities delivered in the chosen WMS solution.

- Building layout, storage characteristics, material handling requirements, product, velocity and much more all influence the optimal mapping, zoning, and configuration within the WMS.

- The demographics, availability, and capabilities of the workforce need to be considered when designing the optimal solution for a specific warehouse operation.

- Requirements can come from external sources as well (i.e. regulatory bodies, taxing authorities, legal customers, etc...), these are the kind of surprises that can send a WMS project into a tailspin.

- Reserve customizations for only the "must have" capabilities that cannot be reasonably achieved using the out-of-the-box WMS solution - the cost of added complexity accumulates over the entire lifespan of the WMS.

Integration Can Be Done Right for the First Time, How?

- Align your communication network's bandwidth requirements with your company's risk tolerance and define breaking points.

- Select the right technology with skillful implementation resources with a clear road map and a track record of success.

- Ensure there are data reconciliation processes and tools embedded within the scope of the project.

- Size the processesor for the data volume and perform capacity planning for optimal system performance.

- Monitor integration both manually and with automated tool; expect 1-3 months slow ramp up and stabilization period before reaching to targeted outputs.

Cloud, on Premise or Hosted?

- Most organizations are moving to cloud based, Multi-Tenant SaaS or dedicated Hosted solutions.

- Cloud WMS must be aligned with the overall coporate IT Strategy.

- Know your partners - often WMS Service Provider and Cloud Service Provider are two seperate entitites that must work in tandem.

- Get the right assistance for negotiating your maintenance and system support contracts and make sure you have ownership and access to your critical data assets.

- Understand your costs and plan appropriately for your Cloud Services in your operating budget.

- Conduct reference checks on your prospective Cloud Services Provider and Systems Integrator.

- Conduct in depth Q&A sessions to ensure all of your concerns are addressed.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- The lack of a detailed project plan and a poor communication stratgey is a recipe for disaster. Develop a comprehensive project plan, review, and revise it frequently as the project porgresses.

- Taking giant leaps and introducing too much change at once instead of walking to the path of success sometimes leads to large scale failures.

- Not reading tall-tale signs and ignoring early status warnings and pushing problems closer and closer to the end of the project rather than course correcting when you still have time to react and resolve issues can lead to surprises late in the project resulting in significant budget and schedule overruns.

- Trying to resolve every issue and gap with a 100% solution when a 80% is good enough has sent many projects into significant overruns.

- Investing too little in training and business readingess can sink a projecet - the best solution in the world will fail if the user base is not properly prepared at the time of Go-Live.

- Claiming victory too early in systems with transaction volumes - some issues will not show up until weeks after a system is launched. Don't get too over confident with a flawless Go-Live and a good few days of defect free operations.

Who Doesn't like to Make Rapid ROI?
We Make it Possible.

- Start with setting up baseline metrics, establish achievable, and agreed upon post Go-Live performance goals - it is crictal to have a reference point of current peformance metrics to help priorities post Go-Live actions and monitor crictical metrics during the post Go-Live ramp-up period.

- We can get more out of the new system faster by actively engaging the user community throughout the entire process and providing the training they require to deliever high performing operations immediatley after implementation - highly engaged people are more likely to embrace the new technoology.

- Our frontline management is fully engaged and they know how to leverage the SAP EWM system's power and tools for purpose of running the warehouse efficiently as possible.

- Test the daylights out of the WMS Solution before the Go-Live. No amount of testing is over testing. Have at least three end-to-end syetem integration tests with at least one day in the life test with actual users.

Selecting the Right Partner

As the number of SAP EWM deployments are on the rise, finding the right implementation partner can be a challenge. The demand for qualified EWM resources is outpacing availability; resulting in difficulty for companies to find the right resources to successfully build and deploy an optimal EWM solution. There are key factors that should be taken into conisderation when selecting an SAP Integration Partner.

- ✔ Expertise in logistics and distribution operations
- ✔ Understanding of and experience integrating with automation and technology
- ✔ Relevant industry experience with a satisifed customer base
- ✔ Partnerships / alliances with key software and services providers
- ✔ Proven track record of successful projects
- ✔ The right people that will deliver quality and forge a strong partnerhship with your organization

About Longbow Advantage

Longbow Advantage is a leading supply chain consulting services firm with deep expertise in warehouse and labor management systems. We put a premium on customer experience, and we value the trust customers put in us to deliver the highest quality in the industry. Our customers are industry leaders who turn to us for our industry experience, faster implementation, and lower total project cost.

Contact Us for More Details

info@longbowadvantage.com
www.longbowadvantage.com
1.888.904.4005

Longbow

Company Headquarters

Longbow Advantage Inc.
3, Place Ville-Marie,
Suite 400
Montreal, QC, H3B 2E3
Canada