Improving London City Bond's Warehouse Management

June 17, 2013

London, UK (rushPRnews) 06/17/13 — London City Bond (LCB) is a large bonded warehousing company with its head office in the Port of Tilbury on the River Thames. Throughout its 150-year history, London City Bond has grown from its roots in the wharfs of Victorian London to become the UK's largest independent and most sophisticated bonded warehouse.

The company can boast over 1,000,000 square feet of bonded storage space, with over 1,000 trade customers ranging from supermarkets and agency houses through to independent wine merchants. In addition it has over 12,000 private customers of all sizes - ranging from individuals with a single case of wine to investors with many hundreds, - LCB's smooth running is totally dependent on a strong warehouse management system.

LCB have been working with Ontech Solution's owner Alan Gilchrist for sixteen years, and recently adopted Ontech's Vision software suite to keep them at the leading edge of innovation in their market. Vision is a fully integrated warehouse management system which comprises several packages designed for the warehousing and distribution trades - all of which suit LCB perfectly.

Each element of the Vision software suite finds a use in LCB's daily

operation. Vision Warehousing allows effective management of their colossal range in excess of 480,000 products warehoused either under bond or duty paid in their differing storage facilities, in addition to managing the whole complex and varied order picking process; the Distribution arm manages all outgoing and incoming deliveries; Vision Bond, which was designed specifically for HMRC customs and excise warehouses, keeps LCB's revenue and customs reports in order and streamlines the reporting process; finally, Vision EPOD lets delivery drivers organise their drops and provides real-time reports at the point of delivery.

During the implementation of the software - which, being such a major change in the company's operations, took 18 months to complete - it became apparent that London City Bond would require certain elements to be adapted and that extra bespoke functions would be needed. As well as all the facets of Vision working in complete unison, the suite has also been integrated with the Customer Information System (CIS), which operates as a web-based customer-facing extension

giving LCB's customers access to stock and all processes throughout the order cycle, in addition to bespoke management information. All this in real time. This complete solution facilitates the electronic processing of up to 15,000 orders per day at peak . The HMRC reporting process is also now fully electronic, with all transactions going through Vision's HMRC gateway.

LCB's General Manager, Michael Stone, comments on the functionality and versatility of the software:

"We've been working with Alan and the team at Ontech for about 15 years now and they've always given us tremendous support, in this highly competitive world our customers needs are constantly developing and it is

critical to our survival that we work with a partner who is innovative, can react quickly, and most importantly understands in depth both our business and that of our customers. In addition of course they must have the confidence and trust of HMRC in the collection of huge amounts of tax and implementing changes to regulations. We now do practically everything through Vision - it's essential for bonded movements where the duty is suspended, because it allows us to move stock when we need to and only pay the duty when it's due. Many of our customers have spending caps, so we need to keep them informed of their liabilities. We also need to be able to issue invoices in formats to suite our customers. For example these may be based on bottles, cases, pallets, or weight, or a combination.

"Another thing is that with everything now being paperless, we save a great deal of time and money that used to go into issuing the many thousands of invoices - printing them used to take days in itself, we now don't just save the postage, we save trees as well! Vision really does do almost everything except actually pick the orders – no doubt it is just a matter of time until they come out with a robot that can do that for us too!"

London City Bond's Vision software solution is currently operating more effectively than ever. It will continue to develop and evolve as both companies work together, and thanks to Ontech's ongoing support, LCB will continue to reap the benefits of a fully integrated and customised management system giving them very real and demonstrable competitive advantage.

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Filed Under: BANKING AND FINANCIAL NEWS, BREAKING NEWS,

PRESS RELEASE, United Kingdom

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