

BlueParrott and Ivanti help Weber enhance productivity in their warehouse operations

Summary

There is no bigger name in the home grill market than Weber. Being one of the largest brands in the industry, day-to-day challenges in the Weber supply chain are inevitable — managing stock movements, maintaining visibility of what is where, and keeping staff safe and on track with product picking.

In Australia the Weber head office tackled these challenges head on. The result was a transformation of their warehouse technology that not only increased productivity but provided a safer workplace by implementing the power of voice.

The challenge

Weber customers have always experienced high service levels, but maintaining these experiences depends on the processes employed within the business.

Technology has always been an important part of Weber's warehouse. Weber was using mobile-computing technology to manage the day-to-day warehouse tasks such as product putaway and order picking.

The business involves handling bulky items that require two-handed picking which cannot be achieved with a device in hand. Another productivity and safety issue identified was the need to move the mobile device out of the workers' hands to allow them to pick goods effectively. The mobile devices in use were also approaching their end of life due to the operating system becoming unsupported.

While these challenges were being faced, another was rising. The COVID-19 pandemic hit in early 2020, and with it came a shift for Weber. With lockdowns in place, the business offered free shipping for online orders. This increased sales and put pressure on the warehouse to be more productive.

The solution

The team at Weber is forward-thinking and stays abreast of the latest technology. Technology such as robotics, AI and voice solutions were all being monitored for their application benefits for Weber, but the immediate need was to replace the existing mobile devices.

Led by Logistics Manager Terry Garner, Weber worked with Intermax to move to new Android-based mobile devices. Weber's mobile app

THE PARTNERSHIP AT A GLANCE

Weber Australia & New Zealand recently shifted to BlueParrott C400-XT headsets which they use with the Ivanti Speakeasy voice solution. With the new voice solution in place, Weber has been able to save a massive two hours a day in warehouse picking time.

Solution

- BlueParrott C400-XT headsets combined with the Ivanti Speakeasy powered by Wavelink voice solution.

Benefits

- Increased productivity - 12 second time reduction per pick.
- Reduction in potential safety issues - A result of moving to handsfree operation.
- Growth - Supports the company's growth effectively by enhancing productivity.
- Team satisfaction - Comfortable to wear and easy to use.



was migrated to the Android operating system using the Ivanti® Velocity migration platform, allowing for a fast changeover in days rather than months. The Ivanti® Velocity migration platform meant Weber could use voice technology for hands-free interaction with their new mobile device.

The Benefits

Productivity and safety gains with voice

Warehouse staff are now being guided by voice for all product putaway and picking. The mobile device is now placed in a waist-mounted holster. Coupled with the BlueParrott C400-XT headset employed to listen and respond to commands being given, staff now work handsfree. Moving to a handsfree operation solved the former handheld operation safety concerns. With less handling of the mobile device, staff can now undertake their tasks at a faster pace allowing for significant productivity gains.

Streamlined implementation

Heightened online sales were placing pressure on the supply chain. With the Ivanti Speakeasy voice solution, Weber was able to move to voice within two weeks of moving to the new mobile devices.

The entire solution was implemented remotely including the voice component. The speed of delivery of the solution meant that the ROI on the technology was realised far sooner.

“Comfort was a major thing when we chose the BlueParrott C400-XT headset. For a person to have to wear something on their head all day it has to have comfort. Lastly, it’s rugged. It’s a warehouse environment and we wanted to make sure the headsets will last for a long time.”

*- Terry Garner, Logistics Manager
Weber AU/NZ.*

Staff adoption was key

The shift to voice-based processes happened quickly in the warehouse with a staged approach to ease the change process.

Initially, voice was used for small functions within the warehouse before a broader rollout. With some hesitancy by staff to adapt to the new way of working, it was within three to four weeks of the initial voice rollout that the team embraced the voice solution. The combination of the upgraded mobile hardware, voice, and the comfortable C400-XT headsets has made life for the warehouse workers a lot easier.



“The BlueParrott C400-XT headsets have performed great. The battery life has enabled us to get through whole shifts. The store people say they’re so comfortable they don’t realise they have them on. And the noise cancellation is great for background noise.”

*- Terry Garner, Logistics Manager
Weber AU/NZ.*

The impact of the shift to voice

With the shift to voice Weber has experienced a 12-second reduction in the time to pick an item. In product-picking numbers, that equates to time savings of 20 minutes for every 100 items picked. This represents a significant boost in productivity, especially given that the Weber Australia operation picks approximately 600 items a day. With the new voice solution in place, they have been able to save a massive two hours a day in picking time. With such productivity gains, customers’ expectations are met, even with an increase in demand.

A voice enabled future

The Weber business in Australia and New Zealand is going from strength to strength and this is greatly supported by a management team that isn’t afraid to look at new technology and invest in it.

- Staff are more productive and safer.
- Managers have greater visibility and accuracy around stock movements.
- Easier onboarding of new warehouse staff with the more intuitive applications in place.

Above all, Weber customers’ expectations are being met, even when the demand for Weber products has increased.

What started as a common need to update mobile devices has resulted in a streamlining of warehouse processes that use the power and simplicity of voice and unlock productivity gains in the Weber supply chain. It’s truly an all-round win for all involved.

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