

Zanios Foods : Leading the Way in Food Service

Zanios Foods is a broad-line foodservice distributor with annual sales in excess of \$100 million. Based in Albuquerque, NM, this family-owned company is nearing its 50th year in business — with plenty to celebrate. Zanios is one of the fastest growing foodservice distributors in the nation. Helping the company reach that point: renowned customers, including Burger King, KFC, Subway and Wendy's. Helping to keep it there: technology — a fully integrated system that boosts efficiency and improve customer service. And now, the newest item on the menu: voice-directed distribution.

The Challenge:

Compete on Service and Price

Serving restaurants, institutions and other large customers is a tough job. For starters, there's the wide variety of food and related products needed on a daily basis.

To accommodate customer needs, Zanios Foods stocks more than 7,000 items: everything from fresh meats and seafood to a full line of produce, frozen foods and "dry grocery," plus disposables and cleaning supplies. It also cuts meat to order and operates an FDA-approved seafood processing facility.

The Zanios warehouse spans more than 200,000 square feet and has five different temperature zones to keep each type of food at its best. What's more, it's up and running seven days a week, virtually round the clock. In an average week, Zanios will pick and ship 150,000 units of product.



As typical in foodservice, most orders will be delivered right to a kitchen area for use that same day — which means there is no tolerance for missed deliveries, short products, or wrong orders. That's why the Standard Operating Procedure at Zanios has been checking every order before it goes out, even though it means dedicating a half dozen (or more) employees to the task.

The bottom line is that the foodservice industry is highly competitive — and becoming more so all the time. Every distributor is buying products at much the same price, up to and including the national giants in foodservice. To succeed today, a company must be able to provide superior customer service and compete on price.

Zanios Foods has found new and better ways to achieve both of these, by putting technology to work.

"Working hands-free and using voice commands solves all kind of problems. In five years, every major player will be using voice."

John Goneau
President
Zanios Foods

Voice Results

Objectives

- Accuracy to eliminate order checking
- Productivity gains
- Full integration

Application

- Order selection: case and "each" picking

Installation

- IDS Power Warehouse™ WMS with IDS Power Voice™ interface
- Vocollect Talkman®T2 terminals: 15 currently; 20–22 planned
- Teklogix 802.11b RF system

Results

- Accuracy increased to 99.98%
- Productivity up 10% or more

ROI

- Payback expected in less than 11 months

Future Applications

- Inventory control
- Cycle counting

"Voice-picking technology is the best hardware and software advancement since the radio-frequency forklift."

John Goneau

President
Zanios Foods

The Solution: "The Power of Integration"

In the past year, Zanios Foods has established a technology infrastructure that will support the dramatic growth the company has been enjoying — and intends to drive into the future.

The key decision was to build upon its existing business management system by Integrated Distribution Solutions, L.L.C. (IDS), recognized as a leader in foodservice, grocery and convenience software solutions. Zanios implemented IDS Power Warehouse™, an integrated, multifunction warehouse management system (WMS).

Plus, Zanios deployed a full RF system and added scanning capabilities, enabling the company to discard its paper-based system and embark on an exciting, new period in its history.

Recently, Zanios also added voice technology, selecting the Talkman® system by Vocollect. With hundreds of installations around the world, Vocollect was the clear choice. First implemented in the picking operation, the IDS Power Voice interface and the Talkman system enable order selectors to receive spoken instructions and literally talk back to the WMS. All the translated data communicates in realtime to IDS Power Warehouse via the RF system.

As Zanios has found, voice makes a dramatic difference in the way people work. Voice eliminates manual data entry, which saves time and avoids errors. It also eliminates handheld devices, which enables people to work hands-free, eyes-free™.

These and other changes transform work processes and improve accuracy, productivity and safety on the job. Even better, improvements in one functional area drive improvements in others. From picking to replenishment to inventory control, voice is a powerful tool for boosting performance throughout the warehouse.

The Result: Accuracy + Productivity = Payback

The main benefit Zanios Foods was seeking from voice-directed picking was improved accuracy without tying up a crew of people checking orders. And that's exactly what it got.

With the Talkman system, the mispick rate dropped to 1:5,000 — that's 99.98% accuracy. Even more important, this is an 80 percent improvement over the previous rate, which included the efforts of six full-time checkers. With voice, orders are virtually perfect without all that checking — and the resources it consumes.

In fact, Zanios has calculated that the cost savings of order-checkers' wages and benefits alone will pay for the system in 11 months. That's not counting the savings from virtually eliminating "hot shots," those rush deliveries by van to make good on shorts and other potential problems.

In addition, the Talkman solution is driving up productivity. For example, voice makes entering catch weights faster and easier. Instead of "speaking" a weight as they do now, selectors used to handwrite each on a weight label, then take their labels to the control center, where a clerical person would key in the data. Extra steps eat up time and build in chances for error.

Another productivity booster: order selectors can now report shorts on the spot. This enables IDS Power Warehouse to initiate replenishment immediately, via an alert to the RF forklift terminals. Based on the time stamp for the replenishment, IDS Power Warehouse can direct a selector back to the slot if it's been re-filled before he finishes his assignment. Zanios estimates it is picking up 40% of its shorts now, and avoiding significant re-work. 🚀



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Vocollect. Voice-Directed Distribution.

Since pioneering voice recognition for industry in 1987, Vocollect has set the standard for warehouses and other business settings. Together, its market-leading Talkman® wearable mobile computer and integrated software suite cut operating costs by eliminating errors and improving worker productivity shift after shift.

Leading WMS providers, material handling integrators and specialty voice solution providers around the world choose the performance and reliability of Vocollect to deliver integrated voice-directed distribution solutions. And every day, over 60,000 workers around the globe rely on Vocollect's integrated voice solution to help improve their operations.