

RADIO BEACON



## A Healthy Investment:

RADIO BEACON™ WMS Helps Natural Health Products Distributor Purity Life Achieve Operational Improvements and Cost Savings

### The Company

Purity Life Health Products Limited is the largest independent distributor of natural health care products in Canada. Based in Acton, Ontario, Purity Life began almost two decades ago as a mail-order operation and has since grown to be a major distributor of industry leading natural health care products to health food stores, pharmacies and department stores including retail giants like Wal-Mart, Loblaws and Shoppers Drug Mart.



### Key Benefits

- **99.8% Accuracy**
- **Productivity Improvements: from 29 lines/hour to 60 lines/hour**
- **Multi-Site Support**
- **Enterprise-Wide Visibility**
- **Lot, Serial, Expiry Date Tracking on Product**



## The Challenge

Purity Life was running a paper-based warehouse with an AS-400 accounting platform and warehouse productivity and order accuracy was suffering from all the typical issues associated with a paper-based operation. Orders were entered and sent to the warehouse. The floor staff used paper pick tickets to fill the orders yet they would often arrive at the requisite bin to discover that stock was out or had been moved to another location. All inventory adjustments were made manually and occasionally these changes were not always properly processed. Inventory control issues accounted for long throughput cycles. Receiving turnaround was one week and order processing took up to three days at a productivity rate of around 29 lines per person, per hour.

As the company's product lines and client list grew throughout the nineties, Purity Life realized that they had to increase productivity in order to keep up with demand. "Purity Life is a distributor, but ultimately we are in the service business," says Chris Warren,

Director of Logistics at Purity Life. "We are driven by service factors and to stay competitive we had to become more productive, more accurate and more responsive to our customers' demands. We needed a change."

A new warehouse facility addition was slated to open in 1998, complete with horizontal carousels to boost productivity. Warren saw the new facility as an opportunity to reorganize Purity Life's warehouse operations and believed that a fully automated WMS with an interface to both the new carousels and the existing AS-400 system was the way to go. "We were contemplating hiring another 6-10 people just to keep up with demand," explains Warren. "Instead, we rethought our new space and realized that we could really maximize our current resources by implementing a warehouse management system. That was when we were introduced to RADIO BEACON."



## The RADIO BEACON Solution

In 1998, RADIO BEACON V.2 was the solution that Purity Life chose for their warehouse. The attractive price and the software's ability to integrate with the AS-400 system and the horizontal carousels made RADIO BEACON the ideal choice for Purity Life. The productivity improvements that Purity Life anticipated by implementing a WMS were almost immediate with RADIO BEACON. Purity Life was able to reduce their receiving time from one week to one day and almost half of the orders received are processed on the same day at a productivity rate of over 60 lines/hour on the floor and 200 lines/hour on the carousel.

Beyond the increase in inventory throughput and picking speed, RADIO BEACON helped Purity Life dramatically improve order and line accuracy, which jumped to 99.8%. Before RADIO BEACON, Purity Life had checkers to review all orders leaving the warehouse and still had customers calling to complain about inaccuracies. With RADIO BEACON,



Purity Life was able to eliminate the checking function and still see a dramatic increase in order accuracy and warehouse productivity. "We had enough confidence in RADIO BEACON as a tool for accuracy that we told our pickers that they were going to be the ones responsible for the orders," says Warren. "So, here we were no longer checking our orders and our order accuracy actually increased. We have RADIO BEACON to thank for that."



## CASE STUDY PURITY LIFE

### Enterprise Wide Efficiencies with RADIO BEACON

RADIO BEACON's reporting capabilities and productivity enhancements continue to make life easier for the warehouse staff at Purity Life; however the software offered some unexpected benefits across the enterprise. Many departments at Purity Life including Purchasing, Quality Assurance and Customer Service, are able to use the information RADIO BEACON provides to support their operations.

The ability to capture and share inventory information as it is moved in and out of the warehouse has allowed the Purity Life customer service team to be more responsive to the client and to trust the accuracy of inventory and order information. The Advanced Replenishment function allows the material handlers to forecast potential needs, saving time and resources. The quality assurance department relies on RADIO BEACON's lot, serial and expiration date tracking features in the event of a product recall or any other type of product integrity issue.

Logistics Director Chris Warren is very pleased with how RADIO BEACON has made his warehouses more efficient and believes that RADIO BEACON had a key role to play in supporting Purity Life's growth over the past five years. "As a distributor, we could not have kept up with customer demand and expanded our business without the confidence of having an accurate tool in the warehouse," explains Warren. "RADIO BEACON was that tool. It was the right tool to help us make the transition to the new facilities and new warehouse processes, and it continues to be the right tool for us at Purity Life."



# WMS

### Upgrading the Solution

In 2001, Purity Life was preparing to add a second warehouse to keep up with demand. Because the new facility was to be a remote location, Purity Life was upgrading their RF hardware and the new physical requirements necessitated a software upgrade. Moving to RADIO BEACON V 3.4, Purity Life was able to boast the same productivity and order accuracy improvements in both facilities. In 2002 a third warehouse was added and RADIO BEACON V 3.4 currently manages Purity Life's entire inventory across three facilities.



RADIO BEACON INC.  
800-247-9526  
[www.radiobeacon.com](http://www.radiobeacon.com)  
[marketing@radiobeacon.com](mailto:marketing@radiobeacon.com)