IoT allowing for more agile supply chain management

DHL Supply Chain is implementing internet of things (IoT) technology into warehousing, with the goal to optimise operational efficiency and lay the foundations for safer work practices. The platform displays operational data and unlocks insights on how well warehouses are running which ultimately helps decision makers at DHL achieve improved measurable results.

Download the full infographic here.

Together with Cisco and startup Conduce, the company is testing the technology at three pilot sites in Germany, the Netherlands, and Poland.

Improved operational efficiency and safety

The solution enables DHL to monitor operational activities in real-time through a responsive graphical visualisation of operational data aggregated from sensors on scanners and material handling equipment, and DHL's warehouse management system. Visualising operational data with heat maps has changed the way data is analysed and used at the pilot sites and is expected to contribute to operational efficiencies and improve employee safety.

"I am excited to be at the forefront of this innovative digital supply chain solution. The ability to monitor operational activities in the warehouse in real-time provides us with the opportunity to proactively re-engineer processes. This way we further enhance the service levels provided to our customers, improve productivity, and provide a platform for our people to be safe in the workplace," says Paul Stone, CEO Africa and MD South Africa, DHL Supply Chain.

Customers benefit with visualised operational data

"In 2015, DHL and Cisco published a joint trend report on the 'Internet of Things in Logistics'. Continuing jointly on the topic of digital transformation, we are turning IoT into reality within the warehouse environment. This is made possible by leveraging existing Cisco Wi-Fi infrastructure within the warehouse to obtain location services together with the Conduce solution," says Chris Dedicoat, executive vice president, Worldwide Sales & Field Operations, Cisco.

DHL customers will benefit from Cisco and Conduce's industry expertise in Wi-Fi infrastructure and operational data visualisation respectively. The pilot sites have revealed valuable insights into activity peaks, warehouse layouts and processes by displaying concentrations of pickers, and material handling equipment against a backdrop of warehouse orders in real time.

"The platform does not just display operational data, it unlocks insights on how well warehouses are running by pulling together data of all elements in a warehouse environment into one unified, engaging interface. Conduce helps decision makers at DHL achieve improved, measurable results in the real world," says Kevin Parent, CEO, Conduce.

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