

U.S. Foods

Descartes Serves Up Foodservice Distribution Efficiencies

U.S. Foods is a leading foodservice distributor with a product lineup spanning more than 350,000 items. To support its rapid growth while ensuring customer satisfaction, the company replaced its inefficient paper-based order management system with Descartes Perform™ for Food. The cloud-based mobile solution helped streamline and automate the company's 'last mile' logistics processes to increase productivity, improve accuracy, and reduce costs.

The Challenge: The Heavy Burden of Paper-based Systems

Helping to shape how Americans eat for more than five generations, U.S. Foods continues to expand to meet the needs of foodservice operations nationwide. But with more than 5,000 drivers operating out of 60 distribution centers across the country, its inefficient paper-based order management processes were hindering growth and compromising customer service. With a rapidly expanding footprint and a growing order volume, the company's complex manual invoicing processes were costly, time-consuming, and error-prone. In addition, overages, shortages and damages (OS&D) were negatively impacting the bottom line and the quality of its delivery service.



U.S. Foods required a solution that could provide added supply chain visibility as well as recognize and correct shortages or errors.



“ U.S. Foods is always looking for innovation. Descartes helped us make our customers' lives easier by increasing efficiency in our operations—even in our accounting system! And when we implemented the Descartes solution, their team not only helped us understand our integration needs from the system perspective, but they also helped us understand our business process needs. ”

– Federico Masais, Sr. Director,
IT Supply Chain Systems, U.S. Foods

ABOUT U.S. FOODS

U.S. Foods is a leading foodservice distributor, partnering with approximately 250,000 chefs, restaurants, and foodservice operators to help their businesses succeed. With nearly 25,000 employees and more than 60 locations, U.S. Foods provides its customers with a broad and innovative food offering and a comprehensive suite of e-commerce, technology, and business solutions.

The Solution: Keeping Kitchens Cooking with Descartes

To keep pace with increasing order volumes in its extensive distribution network, U.S. Foods implemented Descartes Perform for Food. The cloud-based mobile solution provides the company with real-time information across every step of the distribution process, eliminating paper-based systems to improve efficiency, increase accuracy, and reduce operating costs. More than 5,000 drivers now receive daily routes, orders, and manifests electronically using the solution.

“Descartes has enabled us to better manage our resources and, most importantly, our people’s time,” said Federico Masais, Sr. Director, IT Supply Chain Systems at U.S. Foods. “Efficiency and accuracy are two of the qualities our customers expect from U.S. Foods—every delivery, every day. This technology has enabled us to uphold these qualities more strongly than ever before.”

Using the Descartes solution, U.S. Foods can limit overages, shortages, and damages (OS&D) with integrated barcode scanning to identify and track the location of products and assets at all times. Drivers can easily create a clean invoice for every delivery and manage any OS&D issues through their mobile devices in real-time.

With electronic proof of delivery (POD) and real-time visibility of delivery status and chain of custody documentation, U.S. Foods has also minimized customer disputes and write-offs to deliver an enhanced level of customer service.

“We are very committed to making our customers’ lives easier. We have created a new way of servicing our customers to make it as easy as possible for them to understand their adjustments, have a clean invoice, and avoid additional documentation that can contribute to cumbersome back-end processes,” emphasized Masais.

The Results



Increased Efficiency

By eliminating labor-intensive paper processes and automating with mobile technology and electronic POD, U.S. Foods has significantly increased the efficiency of its distribution operations. Drivers now recognize and correct shortages or errors in real-time.



Increased Accuracy

With Descartes Perform™ for Food, U.S. Foods ensures orders are correct, minimizes OS&Ds, and updates delivery records and invoices in real-time. Customers and drivers no longer need to review each line item and pallet content to ensure accuracy.



Cost Savings

By streamlining its order management process with the Descartes solution, U.S. Foods has decreased operating costs and eliminated expensive errors. Integrated barcode scanning—at load, upon delivery, and at customer return—limits costly OS&D issues.



Satisfied Customers

Descartes Perform™ for Food ensures the right products in the right quantity are delivered at the right time. With clean invoices and far fewer OS&Ds, U.S. Foods experienced a reduction in the number of calls to the customer service center.