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PetSmart and WIS International Partner to Deliver Chain Wide Inventory Counts

BUSINESS PROFILE

PetSmart

PetSmart, Inc. (PETM) is the largest specialty retailer of services and solutions for the lifetime needs of pets.

Headquarters

Phoenix, AZ, USA

Industry

United States
Canada

Locations

1172

WIS International Solution

Full-Service Inventory

PetSmart, Inc. (NASDAQ: PETM) operates more than 1,172 stores in the United States and Canada, providing a broad range of competitively priced pet food and pet products; services including pet training, pet grooming, pet boarding and pet adoption services. Stores are stocked with more than 10,000 products, all available at everyday low prices.

PetSmart Growth Drives Process Adherence

Founded in 1996 as the first pet superstore, PetSmart has an innovative philosophy underlying all aspects of its business. With a reputation for “all-pet-excellence”, PetSmart also develops refined processes to enable profitable expansion. Inventory accuracy is a major component of both of these initiatives because product mix increases customer loyalty and revenue alike. To grow a sustainable business model at these rates required a reliable and measurable inventory process. David Green, manager of inventory control said, “With the continuous growth in locations and increasing number of counts, I wanted a way to trust that my inventory service provider could more than just accommodate my scheduling and count needs. I was looking for an inventory service that would partner with PetSmart through regular two-way communication to constantly hone our processes.”

PetSmart Seeks Partner with Innovative Tools

Based on their large store count PetSmart had always viewed the use of multiple inventory services as a necessity to accommodate their inventory count schedule. PetSmart began to engage their service provider for ideas to refine their count process to improve count accuracy and efficiency. Their unique product mix required a customized approach to execution of the count and audit process in order to maintain replenishment systems that drive store deliveries and in-stock positions. WIS International demonstrated a proactive approach to developing customized variance reporting that assisted in delivering greater inventory precision. Based on the focus of improving accuracy of replenishment systems through active partnership with their inventory supplier, PetSmart began to consider vendor consolidation. WIS International’s approach of developing a unique set of solutions based on their customers’ needs quickly set them apart. “At the corporate level, WIS International quickly took the lead in a two horse race. Throughout the evaluation, WIS International acknowledged that with change, a certain amount of challenges would likely arise. To me, their willingness to be upfront about the transition while also providing well thought out plans to accommodate our needs, displayed their commitment to exceptional customer service,” said Green.

WIS International USA

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800-888-8210

WIS International Canada

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PetSmart and WIS International Define Customer Service Excellence

Within the PetSmart organization there was concern that vendor consolidation to a single supplier would present challenges in delivering accurate and timely service to their large store base. The timing of the decision added to the complexity by providing a short period of only two months to schedule, train and perform fiscal year-end inventories in January. Both companies recognized the power that effective communication and rigorous planning had on managing expectations and delivering excellent service to their common customer – PetSmart store operations. Quickly the two companies forged a strong partnership based on a common goal – *deliver improved inventory accuracy to improve replenishment accuracy while maintaining superior service to our joint customers.*

Working together PetSmart and WIS International developed communication protocols to proactively keep store personnel informed of schedules. To help address organizational concerns with the move to a single inventory service provider, PetSmart corporate management presented a clear message to store operations explaining the benefits of the change, while recognizing that some challenges might occur. “Initially, we were all concerned with putting our eggs in one basket. But, the anticipated error rate increases and missed pre-inventory visits did not occur. This really helped gain immediate confidence in WIS International,” Green reflected.

To help prepare the WIS International operations management for PetSmart’s unique inventory process and ensure smooth service delivery, WIS International worked with PetSmart to develop a customized video training course. This training was able to convey a consistent message supported by actual examples videotaped from an in-store PetSmart environment. This vehicle created the expected approach to taking PetSmart inventories across over 1,100 locations across North America. Prior to running an inventory, all crew managers were required to pass a test on the unique aspects of a PetSmart count and consequently become certified. This customized process enabled quick adoption and provided much needed assurance to PetSmart.

PetSmart Measures Improved Results

Over the course of a full year cycle of inventories with WIS International, PetSmart saw several improvements. Since shifting to WIS International, PetSmart store management and loss prevention has been extremely supportive of the changes. “I’ve been told that our stores have never been counted this well and that the transition was seamless. WIS International has consistently exceeded its own accuracy and compliance metrics over prior years,” commented Green. PetSmart attributes the improvements to WIS International’s ability to receive constructive feedback and respond with improvement methods in real-time. Green concluded, “This partnership makes all the difference. WIS International under-promised and over-delivered.”

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