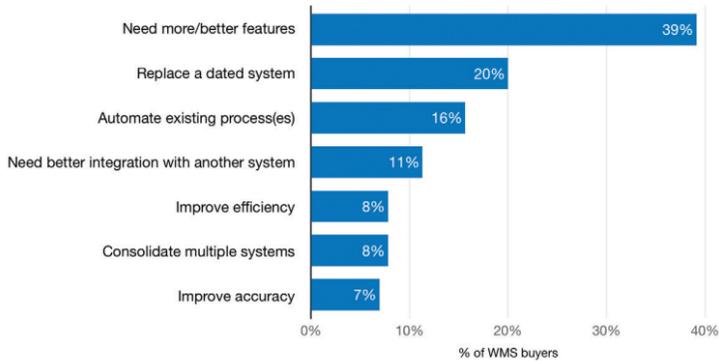


# What are buyers looking for in a WMS?

While there are many tools supply chain professionals can use to optimize their DC operations, few can make the impact of a good warehouse management system (WMS). Among other tasks, a WMS can optimize inventory, putaway, storage, replenishment, picking, and shipping.

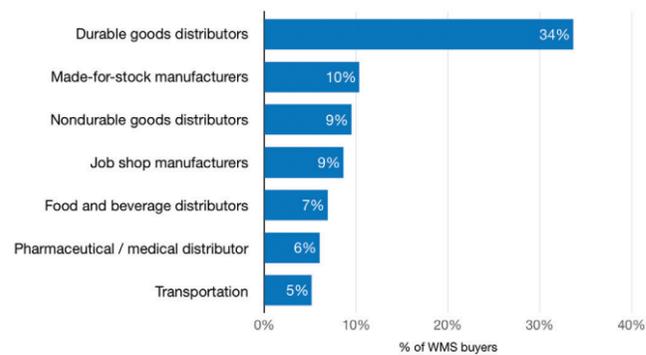
For insight into what buyers are looking for when they go to buy warehousing software, the consultancy Software Connect recently conducted a study into the requirements of high-order-volume businesses. The findings reflect 116 conversations with WMS buyers over the past two years. Responses highlight essential areas that WMS software buyers hope to address in 2018.

## WMS software buyer purchase motivations



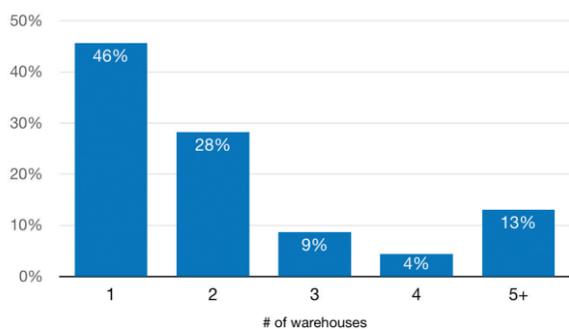
More than one-third of those surveyed are looking to buy a new WMS in order to obtain additional or enhanced capabilities. Another 20 percent are looking to replace an outdated system.

## WMS buyer industry demographics



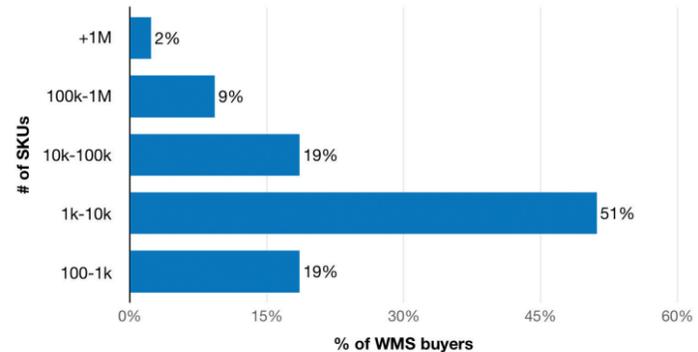
Most WMS buyers focused only on supply chain distribution, although the study also included manufacturers who handled some of their own distribution.

## WMS buyer demographics: Number of warehouses



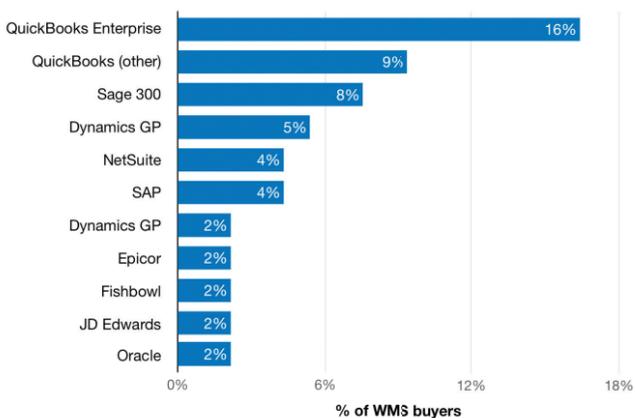
Over half of respondents were looking for software to help manage multiple warehouses. Thirteen percent were responsible for five or more locations.

## WMS buyers: SKU demographics



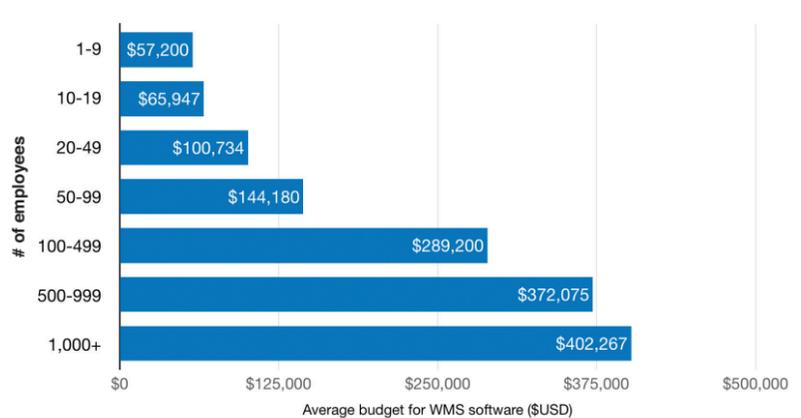
The vast majority of WMS customers polled (70 percent) track 10,000 or fewer SKUs (stock-keeping units). Of those companies, over half handle between 1,000 and 10,000 SKUs.

## What products are WMS software buyers replacing?



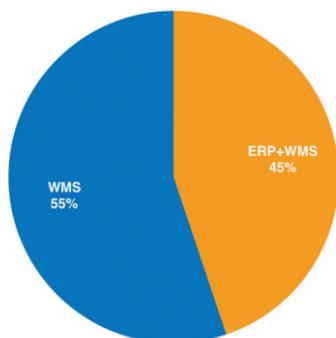
When respondents were asked what types of systems they planned to replace with a new WMS, the answers were all over the map. Surprisingly, some of the systems earmarked for replacement are not really designed for managing warehouse operations.

## Average budget for WMS software, by company size



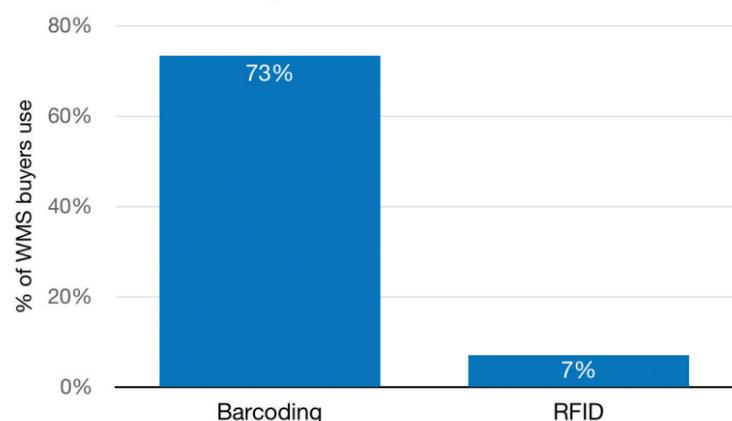
Not surprisingly, WMS budgets increase with the size of the company. Investments in WMS were moderate with smaller businesses (between 1 and 99 employees). Budgets skyrocketed when company size exceeded 100 employees.

## Buyer requirements: ERP+WMS vs. standalone WMS



Warehouse management systems can operate on a standalone basis or be integrated with an ERP (enterprise resource planning) package. The survey respondents were split nearly down the middle when it came to which type they required.

## WMS buyer inventory-tracking methods



Three-quarters of buyers still prefer bar codes to radio-frequency identification (RFID) for tracking inventory.