



## CASE STUDY

**OBJECTIVES** Increase distribution efficiencies, short term return on investment, reduce errors and improve complex processes

**SOLUTIONS** Zetes Voice solution for distributors

### RESULTS

- Improved customer service levels
- Accurate stock management
- Increased operational efficiencies

## VOICE SOLUTION FOR DISTRIBUTORS

### ZETES VOICE SOLUTION IS 'MUSIC TO THE EARS' FOR FABER MUSIC'S WAREHOUSE PICKERS

**Faber Music sees immediate return on investment with pick times cut by at least 25% and almost total elimination of errors.**

Zetes, the auto ID solution provider has implemented a voice picking solution at Faber Music Distribution, one of Europe's largest music distributors and a subsidiary of music publishers, Faber Music Ltd. The voice solution is the final element of a Warehouse Management System; which also included installing a wireless network, handheld computers and truck-mounted terminals within the company's Distribution Centre.

Due to ever increasing costs and a competitive market, Faber Music needed to examine ways of cutting costs and making the Distribution Centre more efficient. Voice picking, with its relatively short term return on investment provides a high impact solution by cutting pick times by at least 25% and virtually eliminating picking errors completely.

"The new voice system has had to be very flexible to make our rather complex business work, with orders being split into general stock orders, bulk picking and also picking archive/manufacture on demand items. But after careful design, implementation and testing, the system really works well for us" says John Hepworth, Managing Director at Faber Music Distribution. "The other important issue in the current



climate is efficiency and switching to voice is even more significant, helping us to create a leaner machine. It means we can get orders out to customers more quickly, ship stock faster into stores and be in a position to take re-orders more quickly too. Looking ahead, the voice system will also make the warehouse more efficient, enabling us to reduce overtime costs during the year and operate a more flexible workforce to meet our busiest trading periods."

**"The users really love the new system and we're very keen to start using it"**

Faber Music's picking system illustrates the benefits of voice directed picking as a warehouse optimisation solution for small to medium sized businesses (SMEs). After its 8 pickers had used the Zetes/Vocollect voice system for just one week, Faber Music Distribution were able to see an instant increase in picking rates compared with their previous paper-based system. Now, a single picker can complete up to 300 order

lines per hour compared with a previous average of 60 to 70 order lines per hour. In addition due to a multi-pick solution; pickers can simultaneously pick 10 orders at a time, giving further productivity improvements.

Faber Music's warehouse operators were involved in the migration to voice from the onset of the project and are equally enthusiastic about their new picking system. It has been customised to identify what the picker is being asked to pick according to its format i.e. 'copy' for a music book, 'CD' for CD, 'DVD' for DVD or 'set' for an orchestra pack. The system also switches from descriptive identifiers, used for the majority of mainstream or English language publications to item number identifiers, used for foreign language publications and more obscure, international composers.



"The users really love the new system and were very keen to start using it," says John Hepworth. "It is human nature to avoid change and at the start we had a few within the team who were quite cautious - mainly some of the older members of staff. But once they started working with voice, all their concerns were allayed straight away and have said they wouldn't want to go back to a paper-based system."

"Voice picking has traditionally been seen as the preserve of large companies running very high throughput warehouse operations. This implementation for Faber Music demonstrates the flexibility of voice directed working, and proves that SMEs too can see an immediate efficiency and productivity return when they make the switch," says James Hannay, Managing Director UK and Ireland for Zetes.

Faber Music Distribution is using Vocollect Talkman devices with Zetes 3iV voice software implemented by Zetes. The voice system is integrated through Solarsoft's WMS middle ware system to the Powerforce back end system.



## ABOUT FABER MUSIC

Faber Music prints under its own imprint and also controls the European print rights to Warner Brothers Publications and EMI Music Publishing. Faber Music Distribution stocks in excess of 177,000 titles/Sku's and ships over 3,500 orders for sheet music and related products, generating in excess of 45,500 order lines per month.

The company sells to both music retailers and wholesalers together with sales direct to the public through its website [www.expressprintmusic.com](http://www.expressprintmusic.com).

Faber Music Distribution sells its sheet music publications worldwide, and regards the overseas market as offering its biggest growth opportunities in the coming years.

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