

Sterling Commerce

An IBM Company

Sterling Warehouse Management System: Overview

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Preface

Sterling Warehouse Management System: Overview provides a glimpse into the Sterling Warehouse Management System and lists its various features.

Intended Audience

This document is intended to provide assistance to all users of Sterling Warehouse Management System.

Structure

This document contains the following sections:

Chapter 1, "Sterling Warehouse Management System Overview"

This chapter introduces the Sterling Warehouse Management System and provides an insight into the business challenges, benefits, and scope of the Sterling Warehouse Management System.

Chapter 2, "Features Overview"

This chapter provides a brief overview of the Sterling Warehouse Management System features.

Documentation

For more information about the Sterling Warehouse Management System™ components, see the following manuals:

- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Release Notes*

- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Installation Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Overview*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Implementation Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Reports Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Business Intelligence Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Printed Documents Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Billing Activity Reporting Engine Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Upgrade Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Voxware Integration Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Javadocs*

For more information about the Selling and Fulfillment Foundation components, see the following manuals:

- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Release Notes*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Installation Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Upgrade Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Configuration Deployment Tool Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Performance Management Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: High Availability Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: System Management Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Localization Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Customization Basics Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Customizing APIs Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Customizing Console JSP Interface for End User Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Customizing the RCP Interface Guide*

- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Customizing User Interfaces for Mobile Devices Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Customizing Web UI Framework Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Customizing Swing Interface Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Extending the Condition Builder Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Extending the Database Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Extending Transactions Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Using Sterling RCP Extensibility Tool Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Integration Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Product Concepts Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management™ System: Concepts Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Application Platform Configuration Guide*
- *Sterling Distributed Order Management™: Configuration Guide*
- *Sterling Supply Collaboration: Configuration Guide*
- *Sterling Global Inventory Visibility™: Configuration Guide*
- *Sterling Catalog Management™: Configuration Guide*
- *Sterling Logistics Management: Configuration Guide*
- *Sterling Reverse Logistics™: Configuration Guide*
- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Configuration Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Application Platform User Guide*
- *Sterling Distributed Order Management: User Guide*
- *Sterling Supply Collaboration: User Guide*
- *Sterling Global Inventory Visibility: User Guide*
- *Sterling Logistics Management: User Guide*
- *Sterling Reverse Logistics: User Guide*

- *Sterling Warehouse Management System: User Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Mobile Application User Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Business Intelligence Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Javadocs*
- *Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Suite: Glossary*
- *Parcel Carrier: Adapter Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Multitenant Enterprise Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Password Policy Management Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Properties Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Item Concepts Guide*
- *Selling and Fulfillment Foundation: Pricing Concepts Guide*
- *Business Center: Item Administration Guide*
- *Business Center: Pricing Administration Guide*
- *Business Center: Customization Guide*
- *Business Center: Localization Guide*

Conventions

In this manual, Windows refers to all supported Windows operating systems.

The following conventions may be used in this manual:

| Convention | Meaning |
|------------------|---|
| . . . | Ellipsis represents information that has been omitted. |
| < > | Angle brackets indicate user-supplied input. |
| mono-spaced text | Mono-spaced text indicates a file name, directory path, attribute name, or an inline code example or command. |

| Convention | Meaning |
|-------------------|--|
| / or \ | Slashes and backslashes are file separators for the Windows, UNIX, and LINUX operating systems. The file separator for the Windows operating system is "\" and the file separator for UNIX and Linux systems is "/". The UNIX convention is used unless otherwise mentioned. |
| <YANTRA_HOME_OLD> | User-supplied location of the installation directory for previously installed releases. This is only applicable for Releases 7.7, 7.9, and 7.11. |
| <YFS_HOME_OLD> | This is the <YANTRA_HOME>/Runtime directory of previously installed releases. This is only applicable for Releases 7.7, 7.9, and 7.11. |
| <INSTALL_DIR> | User-supplied location of the Selling and Fulfillment Foundation installation directory. This is applicable for Release 8.0. |

Note: The Selling and Fulfillment Foundation documentation set uses the following conventions in the context of the product name:

- Yantra is used for Release 7.7 and earlier.
- Sterling Supply Chain Applications is used for Releases 7.9 and 7.11.
- Sterling Multi-Channel Fulfillment Solution is used for Releases 8.0 and 8.2.
- Selling and Fulfillment Foundation for Release 8.5.

Sterling Warehouse Management System Overview

The Sterling Warehouse Management System is specially tailored to manage operations in a mid-sized, finished goods distribution center (DC). Shipments may be shipped to consumers, retailers or distributors, or mom and pop stores. The key problems solved by Sterling Warehouse Management System are shipment consolidation or transportation optimization, customer compliance, productivity, and space optimization.

This chapter elaborates on the business challenges, benefits, and scope of Sterling Warehouse Management System.

1.1 Business Challenges

Managing inventory across a network is fraught with challenges. Enterprise software systems should facilitate company-wide inventory visibility and control, even when inventory is managed in a network of diverse and heterogeneous operating facilities. All too often, when selecting inventory management systems, business decision makers tend to compromise on a solution that can never achieve company-wide inventory visibility and control. Software applications make businesses more productive by eliminating redundant data entry and potential errors. Software enables a business to scale operationally while facilitating high levels of customer service that are typical of the smallest organizations. However, for maximum efficiencies, multi-site businesses require software applications that:

- Don't force major changes to operating practices
- Take advantage of today's best practices

- Manage the subtle complexities that are unique to how each particular business drives value for its customers

Increasing customer demands and an ever-changing environment drives businesses today. Some factors that influence business processes are:

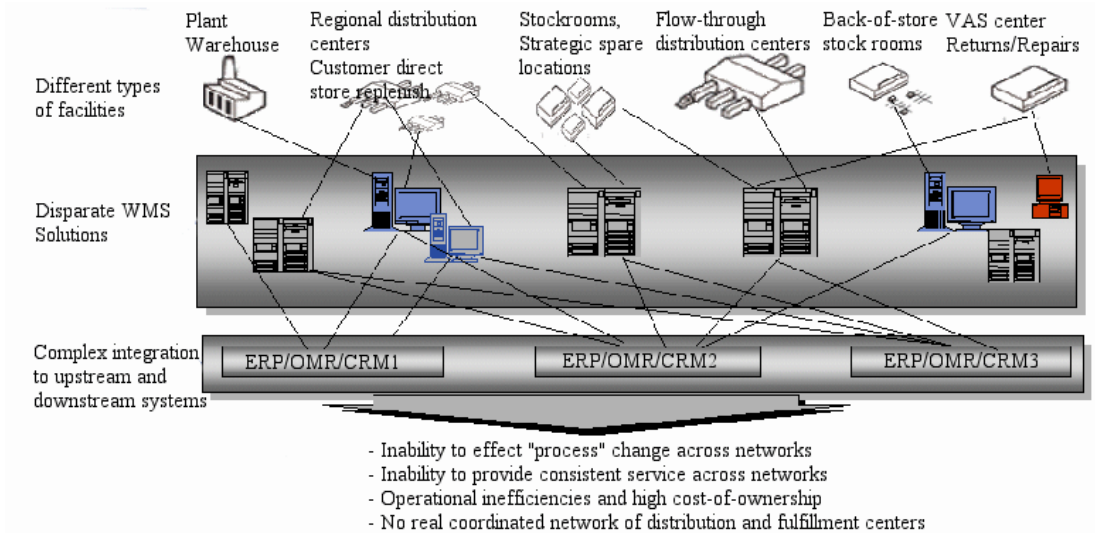
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Introduction of new products or product lines
- Addition of new business channels
- Consolidation of facilities
- Business outsourcing
- Increasing transportation cost
- Poor utilization of resources, such as labor, facilities, equipments, locations, and so forth.
- Servicing new customers and fulfilling each of their unique compliance demands

Businesses must manage inventory in a variety of facilities that may include Plant Warehouses, Regional Business Centers, Stock Rooms, Stores, and Flow-through Distribution Centers.

Due to the disparate nature of these facilities, each facility employs different operational processes. This leads to complexity in operations and lack of centralized visibility, increased infrastructure costs, and quality issues.

Due to the variety of facilities in a complex warehousing environment, disparate systems are used throughout the network. This results in higher infrastructure and ownership costs at each facility. Integrating systems across such facilities becomes complex, and implementing business process changes is a challenge. [Figure 1–1](#) illustrates a typical network built on disparate warehousing systems.

Figure 1–1 Network of Disparate Warehousing Systems



Offering complete visibility and automating operations in a complex warehouse environment requires thorough knowledge of business processes combined with state-of-the-art technology. An efficient warehouse management system helps businesses:

- Achieve increased productivity levels
- Improve inventory accuracy
- Adhere to varying compliance requirements
- Manage logistics effectively

As businesses strive to keep pace with the changing environment, it is also imperative to keep operating costs low. Usually, the trade-off balances the needs against the cost of acquiring and deploying best-in-class software at each facility. Lower cost options today include software that slightly addresses a portion of the labor productivity problem, but fails to deliver the ability to scale those best practices that make a business unique. In many cases, software is used in only the largest facilities, while no software is used in smaller facilities because the costs are too prohibitive.

Sterling Warehouse Management System eliminates the cost versus capabilities trade-off and offers the best-in-class warehouse management software that can be leveraged across all types of inventory stocking situations, from the largest facilities down to the smallest stocking locations.

1.2 Benefits of Sterling Warehouse Management System

The Sterling Warehouse Management System is designed to manage fulfillment and distribution across a network of facilities, including regional distribution centers, master distribution centers, fulfillment centers, stockrooms, plant warehouses, repair centers, and more. With its high degree of configurability and service-oriented architecture, Sterling Warehouse Management System enables responsive customer fulfillment, improved operational efficiency, greater flexibility for growth, and ultimately, a lower total cost of ownership in large-scale and complex fulfillment environments.

In short, Sterling Warehouse Management System enables you to:

- Make better decisions by automating business processes
- Reduce time-to-market by reacting quickly to market changes
- Increase revenue through effective collaboration

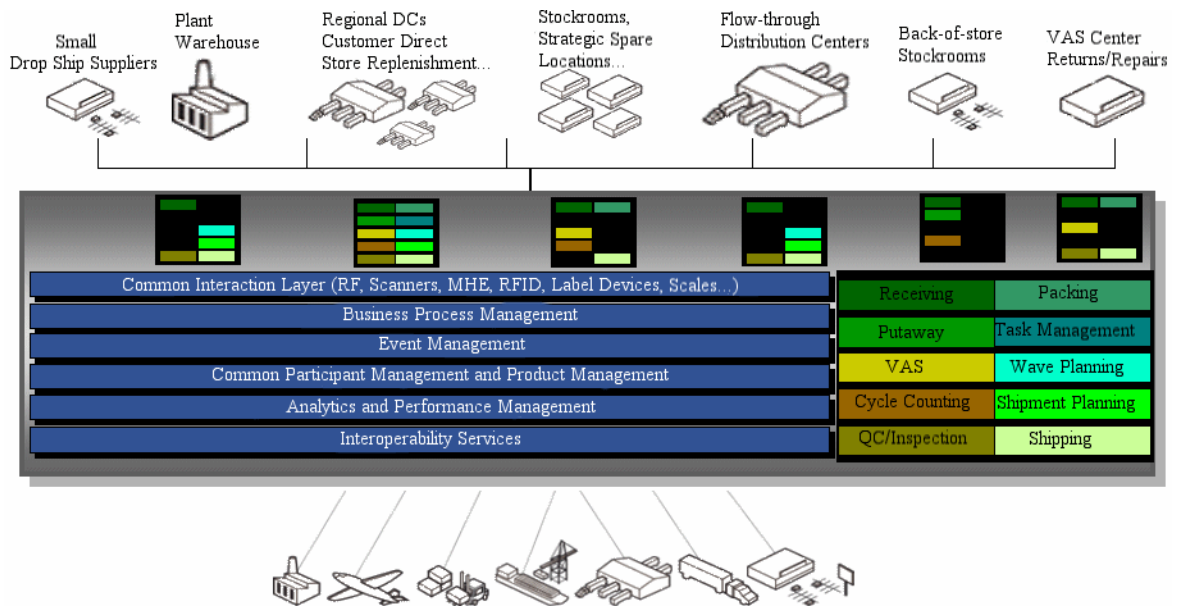
Rich in features and functionality, Sterling Warehouse Management System provides the following key capabilities:

- [Networked Solution](#)
- [Multi-Enterprise Management](#)
- [Process Centric](#)
- [Comprehensive Product Management](#)
- [Complete Visibility](#)
- [Vendor Performance](#)
- [Radio Frequency Identification Enabled](#)
- [Optimized Operations](#)

1.2.1 Networked Solution

Sterling Warehouse Management System is unique in its architecture: it is the only warehouse management system that is designed as a networked solution. It is built on a service-oriented, component-based architecture. Figure 1–2 depicts the network solution design of the Sterling Warehouse Management System.

Figure 1–2 The Sterling Warehouse Management System Component-Based Architecture



Sterling Warehouse Management System provides lower cost of ownership, higher flexibility, and consistent customer service.

1.2.2 Multi-Enterprise Management

A business or business channel can be modeled as an enterprise in Sterling Warehouse Management System, thus allowing warehouses to handle inventory and processes uniquely for diverse enterprises. Sterling Warehouse Management System can be easily configured to suit business needs and processes for each enterprise.

Sterling Warehouse Management System provides network-wide control through a common catalog of services for multiple enterprises within a warehouse, thus ensuring the optimal use of labor and assets, despite process diversity.

1.2.3 Process Centric

Sterling Warehouse Management System is process centric, making it highly configurable. Traditional warehouse solutions are services intensive, and provide data-centric configurations.

The process management model in Sterling Warehouse Management System is optimized for supply chain operations, and integrates monitoring with event and task management. The process flow definition in Sterling Warehouse Management System is highly extensible, which enables each implementation to incorporate the custom logic necessary for keeping a competitive advantage.

Sterling Warehouse Management System is adaptive to changes in facility and operations. It provides the ability to configure business processes for disparate facilities, such as Plant Warehouses, Regional Distribution Centers, Stock Rooms, and Value-Added Services (VAS) centers. Sterling Warehouse Management System facilitates incorporating changes in the network through virtual deployment of ship nodes, inheritance of rules, and configuration deployment tools.

The net-native framework makes Sterling Warehouse Management System highly interoperable, and enables internationalization and localization. This networked solution is highly scalable, and provides a central control point to introduce new business processes, and technologies.

Sterling Warehouse Management System thus provides flexibility for business demands, reduced implementation time, and rapid response to customer demands.

1.2.4 Comprehensive Product Management

Sterling Warehouse Management System is built to track and control inventory of products or items across an organizational network. Various parameters and granular definitions bundled into Sterling Warehouse Management System ensure consistent handling and measurement of inventory, and accurate handling of variable goods.

Sterling Warehouse Management System provides the capability to improve inventory accuracy by tracking user-defined product attributes, such as lot number, serial number, and so on.

1.2.5 Complete Visibility

Sterling Warehouse Management System enables effective management of warehouse operations by providing wall-to-wall visibility of all critical information about inventory, orders, shipments, or containers. A warehouse operation benefits from visibility into this process information. By leveraging Sterling Warehouse Management System Alert Framework, the process is proactively monitored for potential problems, thereby enhancing productivity levels.

Sterling Warehouse Management System provides Web-based consoles to monitor, control, and direct day-to-day operations. Consoles like Task Management, Wave Planning, Pick Planning, and Event Management enable automation of daily operations.

Sterling Warehouse Management System raises proactive and reactive events, and raises appropriate exceptions through the Event Management layer.

1.2.6 Vendor Performance

Sterling Warehouse Management System provides features that include Advanced Ship Notice (ASN) matching, inventory disposition, and product classifications that enables for vendor rating and performance. Other features support tracking a carrier's capabilities for delivery compliance. Similarly, other partner's performance to agreement can be captured and reported.

1.2.7 Radio Frequency Identification Enabled

Sterling Warehouse Management System is designed to allow the adoption of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology, allowing the definition of new RFID-driven business processes in your warehouse operations.

1.2.8 Optimized Operations

The Sterling Warehouse Management System offers real-time, constraint-based optimization of processes in warehouses, thus reducing labor costs and improving productivity.

1.3 New Levels of ROI Driven by the Sterling Warehouse Management System

Sterling Warehouse Management System solves business challenges and provides solutions, thus driving new levels of Return On Investment.

This is shown in [Table 1–1](#).

Table 1–1 Sterling Warehouse Management System ROI

| To solve the... | Sterling Warehouse Management System makes it possible to... | Driving a new level of ROI by... |
|--|---|--|
| Lack of best practices in smaller scale stocking and warehousing operations within the enterprise | Internally drive WMS benefits across the internal network of operations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowering IT costs with centralized deployment • Lowering inventory with visibility • Reducing inventory errors and data entry errors • Increasing asset utilization |
| Operational inefficiencies present in channel-partner operations due to the lack of inventory control | Offer WMS capabilities to the channel in order to facilitate the rollout of best practices at the network level to optimize inventory, productivity and velocity in the channel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing end customer service level attainment • Lowering channel partner costs • Balancing network-wide inventory allocation • Lowering working capital and increasing network capacity and velocity • Addressing the multi-enterprise problem by providing the ability to manage their processes, which might be unique for each enterprise, and helping them utilize their assets that may be scattered across enterprises. |
| Customer burden of managing the rising cost of order administration and local inventory management at multiple locations | Deploy integrated supply and manage inventory stock locations at customer sites | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowering customer order administration costs • Increasing product availability • Lowering customer investments in working capital • Increasing margin through fee-for-service • Increasing sales |
| Ongoing supplier compliance issues and the rising costs of enforcement | Deploy functionality to suppliers on an as-needed basis to enforce ASN standards, RFID mandates, label formatting, data standards, quality and packaging compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced receiving errors and handling • Reduced inventory through direct-ship programs • Increased sales through better visibility |

1.4 Sterling Warehouse Management System Users

Sterling Warehouse Management System can be used by any customer who has one or more facilities in their supply chain network.

Some of the potential users of Sterling Warehouse Management System are:

- Manufacturers

Manufacturers use Sterling Warehouse Management System to manage processes in their plant and distribution centers. They can use Sterling Warehouse Management System to ship products to retailers, mom- and -pop stores, directly to customers, and so on.

- Logistics providers

Logistics providers use Sterling Warehouse Management System to provide warehousing and distribution services to multiple clients. Each client may have inventory in multiple facilities, with each facility being used to service multiple clients.

- Retailers

Retailers use Sterling Warehouse Management System to manage operations in their distribution centers, and ship to stores or fulfillment centers for their direct-to-customer channels.

Retailers may be:

- Traditional retailers who use Sterling Warehouse Management System in their distribution centers to manage shipping to stores.
- Online or Catalog retailers who use Sterling Warehouse Management System to ship directly to customers.

- Distributors

Distributors use Sterling Warehouse Management System to manage operations in their central distribution centers and regional distribution centers.

Features Overview

The Sterling Warehouse Management System is a Web-based application that provides a comprehensive end-to-end solution, thus helping businesses manage their inventory and processes throughout their network, through a synchronized warehouse management system.

Sterling Warehouse Management System is built using a robust architectural framework that provides enough flexibility to adapt to changing business needs.

The various modules of the Sterling Warehouse Management System are described briefly in this chapter. For more information about the modules and their processes and solutions, see the *Sterling Warehouse Management System: Implementation Guide*.

2.1 Inventory Control

This module provides:

- Granular tracking of inventory at a location, case, or pallet based on item attributes, including lot number, serial number, and so forth.
- Putaway of inventory.
- Retrieval of inventory.
- Replenishment of locations.
- Count.
- Management, visibility, and monitoring of inventory in a warehouse.

2.2 Inbound

This module provides:

- Comprehensive visibility to inbound shipments.
- Pre-receiving.
- Shipment, Purchase Orders (PO), Blind receiving.
- Putaway of receipts.

2.3 Quality Control

This module provides:

- Quality profiling.
- Quality Inspection.
- Comprehensive visibility to quality processes.

2.4 Task Management

This module provides:

- Task generation.
- Task assignment.
- Task interleaving.
- Management, visibility, and monitoring of tasks in a warehouse.

2.5 Reverse Logistics

This module provides:

- Returns pre-receiving.
- Returns receiving.
- Serial number capture.
- Disposition of inventory.
- Putaway of return receipts.

2.6 Value-Added Services

This module provides:

- Kitting and dekitting for static or dynamic Bill of Materials (BOM).
- Customer compliance such as special ticketing, security tagging, and so forth.
- Support for Build-to-Stock, Build-to-Customer, or Build-to-Order.
- Retrieval of component inventory.
- Putaway of kit inventory.
- Management, visibility, and monitoring of all VAS activities.

2.7 Cross Dock

This module provides:

- Opportunistic as well as planned cross dock.
- Product diversion to cross dock staging or directly to outbound shipping lanes.
- Cross dock based on items and for units, cases, or pallets.

2.8 Outbound

This module provides:

- Order release consolidation.
- Shipment routing.
- Grouping of shipments and wave planning.
- Constraint based real time optimization to suggest the best picking strategy.
- Containerization for optimizing packing and freight cost.
- Replenishment for demand.
- Picking.
- Packing.
- Outbound VAS.

- Less than Truck Load (LTL) or Truck Load (TL) Shipments, Bill of Lading (BOL).
- Manifesting for Parcel Shipments.
- Trailer loading.
- Management, visibility, and monitoring of all outbound activities.
- Pack and Hold Process
- Electronic Shipper Export Declaration Process

2.9 Reports

This module provides the following reports:

2.9.1 Inbound Reports

This module provides the following inbound reports:

- Await Material Report
- Delivery Dock Schedule Report
- Dock to Stock Cycle Time KPI Report
- Inbound Labor Requirements Report
- Item Attribute Setup Report
- Receipt Discrepancy Report
- Receipt Detail Report
- Receipt Summary Report
- Shipment Billing Summary Report
- Vendor Non-Compliance Report

2.9.2 Return Reports

This module provides the following return reports:

- Returns By Reason Code Report

2.9.3 Inventory Reports

This module provides the following inventory reports:

- Containers Not Having Standard Quantity Report
- Cycle Count Variance Daily Report
- Cycle Count Variance Monthly Report
- Cycle Count Variance Weekly Report
- Dedicated Locations Usage Report
- Dedicated Locations Activity Report
- Empty Location Report
- Inventory Aging Report
- Inventory Audit Report
- Inventory Balance Report
- Inventory Hold Report
- Item Inventory Across Nodes Report
- Item Inventory Report
- Item Tag No. Report
- Item Velocity Report
- Location Inventory Detail Report
- Location Inventory Summary Report
- Location/SKU Velocity Mismatch Report
- Node Inventory Valuation Report
- Participant List Report
- Space Consolidation Report
- Space Utilization Report

2.9.4 VAS Reports

This module provides the following VAS reports:

- Work Order Report

2.9.5 Outbound Reports

This module provides the following outbound reports:

- BOL Total Weights Report
- Container Volume Monthly Report
- Daily Shipment Report
- Dock Pickup Schedule Report
- Generic Shipper Report
- Hot Inventory Report
- On Time Shipment Report
- Order Billing Summary Report
- Order Cycle Time KPI Report
- Order Shipment Report
- Outbound Labor Requirements Report
- Pack and Hold Shipment Report
- Parcel Manifest Report
- Replenishment Status Report
- Same Day Pick Pack Ship Percentage Report
- Shipment Billing Summary Report
- Shipment Fill Rate Monthly Report
- Shipments Near or Past Cancel Date Report
- Shipment Shortage Report
- Staging Locations Report
- Vendor Non-Compliance Report

2.9.6 Task Reports

This module provides the following task reports:

- In-Progress Container Summary Report
- In-Progress Shipment Summary Report

- User Productivity Daily Report
- User Productivity Weekly Report
- User Productivity Monthly Report
- Warehouse Activity Completion Report

2.9.7 Billing Activity Reporting Engine Reports

This module provides the following billing activity reporting engine reports:

- Billing Activity Report

2.10 Printed Documents

This module provides the following prints:

2.10.1 Inbound Prints

This module provides the following inbound labels:

- License Plate Label
- Putaway Task List
- Receiving Worksheet

2.10.2 Inventory Prints

This module provides the following inventory prints:

- Count Sheet
- Hazmat SKU Label
- Replenishment Task List
- Retrieval Task List
- UPC Case Code Label

2.10.3 Outbound Prints

This module provides the following outbound prints:

- Carrier Labels

- Cart Manifest Task List
- Certificate of Origin
- Combined Picking and Packing Slip
- Commercial Invoice
- Item Pick Task List
- LTL Manifest
- Multi-SKU UCC-128 Container Shipping Label
- North American Free Trade Agreement Certificate of Origin
- Packing Slip
- Packing Slip with Lot- and Serial-Tracked Items
- Packing Slip With Package Level Details
- Packing Slip with Lot- and Serial-Tracked Package Level Details
- RFID Slap and Slip Label
- Shipper's Export Declaration
- Single-SKU UCC-128 Container Shipping Label
- Special Ticket Label
- VICS Bill Of Lading

It also enables you to configure prints and printer.

2.11 Location Mass Maintenance

This module provides:

- Locations that are selected based on the criteria.
- The attributes of the locations can be updated with the new values.

2.12 Dynamic Velocity Calculation

This module provides:

- The speed at which an item moves in a warehouse.
- Support for calculating new velocity codes for items.

2.13 Integration With Slotting Engines

This module provides:

- Space Utilization
- Picking Efficiency

2.14 Integration with a Voice-based System

This module provides:

- Defining an external voice application in the Sterling Warehouse Management System.
- Associating a voice application with a ship node in the Sterling Warehouse Management System.
- Enabling the voice-based picking operation.

2.15 Packing

This module provides:

- Shipment-Driven Packing
- Item-Driven Packing
- Verify Packing
- Unpack

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