

YourRetailCoach Dubai - Pioneers Cutting-Edge Warehouse Modernization with Innovative Solutions

Warehouses of the yesteryears affected by these changes must rise up to the occasion with modernisation.

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Traditional warehousing solutions no longer meet the demands of modern-day business requirements. It does not mean that traditional warehouses have become redundant but their roles further down the supply chain have become restricted.



The contemporary requirements of warehousing now entail competing with the standards of eCommerce. Warehouses of the yesteryears affected by these changes must rise up to the occasion with modernisation. This blog highlights the areas and approach required in this endeavour with an emphasis on the MENA region comprising nations like the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Qatar.

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Empowering Retail & E-commerce businesses worldwide.”

Nikhil Agarwal

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The first step towards warehouse upgradation is making an analysis of the requirements or specifications. This entails envisioning the warehouse to be upgraded in its new roles and functionalities. These requirements differ

from organisation to organisation and hence, influence the transformation process. In requirement analysis, an extensive range of factors is taken into account for assessment covering:

- Business plan and strategies
- Type of inventory

- Storing and stowing requirements
- Frequency of inventory mobility
- Order frequency, range of volume of orders
- Logistics
- Technology
- Safety and security, etc.

Warehouse layout and modernisation

Warehouse layouts are bound to change in the event of modernisation. Modernisation necessitates changes in operations. The layout of warehouses must support operations and workflows. Also, layouts influence the quality of process execution in warehouses.

Swift navigation is critical in warehouses for swiftness in operations. The level of expertise that goes into warehouse space planning affects the movement of people, equipment, and inventory in warehouses. Swiftness in operations and optimisation of storage capabilities allow the handling of higher volumes of inventory.

Operational precision also tends to be higher in well-planned warehouse layouts. The layout also affects the distances and efforts required to complete tasks. Many elements of safety and ergonomics also get addressed in layout planning. These factors should not be overlooked in warehouse modernisation planning.

Altering the layout of a warehouse is a costly scheme. Proper financial planning is critical here.

Storage systems and modernisation

The storage systems used in traditional warehouses cannot meet the demands of modern businesses. For starters, contemporary warehouses have to deal with an extensive variety of products and variants. Traditional storage solutions were not cut for such results. Secondly, today's warehouses are capable of processing inventory in large quantities. The traditional storage systems are a better cut for handling low volume.

Thirdly, the frequency of movement of inventory in modern-day warehouses is relatively much higher than in their traditional counterparts. Storage systems also play a key role in achieving space optimisation, high operational performance, and higher ROI.

Technology requirements for modern warehouses

Technology has become an integral element of contemporary warehouses. Here, three important technology requirements are WMS (Warehouse Management System), warehouse automation, and warehouse analytics.

WMS, along with its analytical capabilities, lends speed and accuracy to inventory and overall warehouse management. Firstly, it provides a real-time view of inventory levels. This helps reduce the chances of overstocking and stockout situations. Secondly, it makes order management easier by allowing control over the same from a single platform cutting across various teams and departments. WMS is also capable of helping achieve the objectives of warehouse space optimisation. It reduces the quantum of manual intervention in warehouse operations.

Automation is not something new to warehouse management. What has changed is the degree of automation applied. Today, robots are taking over warehouses and fulfilment centres reducing the need for manual intervention to a handful of decisions and keeping a watch. Keeping that kind of automation aside, some of the simpler warehouse automation solutions are Automated Storage and Retrieval Systems (AS/RS), Conveyor Systems, Automated Guided Vehicles (AGVs), Automated Picking Systems, etc.

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The changing business landscape over the years has caused warehouse operations to change. Warehouse operations planning must reflect the standards and expectations of modern-day warehousing. Operations planning also impacts the knack for workflow optimisation and efficient resource utilisation. It also helps in optimising manpower requirements and developing more effective staffing solutions. The class of operations planning could make or break the ability of warehouses in handling more volumes and execute processes with more swiftness and precision.

Two important aspects of warehouse operations planning are the development and implementation of warehouse SOPs (Warehouse Standard Operating Procedures) and the establishment of warehouse KPIs.

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Warehouse modernisation demands high investments and also entails higher operating costs. From interior structural changes and the setting up of new layouts to operating and maintenance expenses, there are significant implications on the financial front. Without sound financial planning, warehouse modernisation endeavours can turn out to be a daunting task.

Having a financial vision and plan also helps in achieving better ROI. Given below are some of the important aspects to be included in warehouse modernisation financial planning:

- Capital requirements
- Operational outlays

- Budgeting
- Demand projections
- Revenue projections
- Inventory turnover rates
- Cost control measures
- Technology maintenance and upgradation
- Planning for creation of reserves and funds
- Contingency planning
- Insurance
- CBA (Cost-Benefit Analysis)
- ROI analysis

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Incorporating the element of ergonomics is gaining increasing prominence in warehousing solutions. Ergonomics is the science and art of developing and maintaining a work environment that is conducive for employees. For example, the space between isles or workstations should be large enough so that employees can move more freely and safely. Another instance is having bold signage for easy navigation. Ergonomics goes beyond ensuring the safety and security in workplaces and extends to making workplaces smooth and comfortable.

A few prerogatives in warehouse safety management:

- Implementing fire and fall prevention measures
- Implementing Standard Operating Procedures (e.g. SOPs for material and equipment handling - <https://www.yourretailcoach.ae/services/sop-development/>)
- Using signages and navigational maps
- Providing job and safety training
- Deployment of emergency response systems
- Conduct of periodical drills,
- Guidelines and facilities for appropriate waste disposal, etc.

Security-related considerations in warehouses concern the incorporation of proper security measures and proper management of assets encompassing:

- Inventory
- Storage solutions
- Equipment and devices
- Land and building
- Deployment of surveillance measures
- Maintenance of logistical assets, etc.

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Changes in a business environment or corrections/changes in business strategies often affect [warehouse management and operations](#). For example, a furniture brand deciding to add a new product (say bed) to respond to growing demand for the same will have to make the required space for inventory in its warehouse. It is also possible that to cater to a wider market, the furniture brand may have to make room for additional inventory levels. Warehouses are giant and complex structures and thus, making changes in them is challenging if ever the need arises. Therefore, it is important to keep the aspects of flexibility and scalability in mind in warehouse modernisation so that a need for re-modernisation does not arise soon.

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Traditional warehouses cannot meet the demands of modern-day business enterprises. Modernisation is the answer to this challenge. It begins with envisioning and establishing the new warehouse requirements in light of the altered business models, plans, and strategies. The ensuing deviations in the internal framework swiftly call for improvisations in the warehouse layout. However, this cannot be done without considering the changes required in the storage systems and solutions.

Then there are the elements of operations and technology. The new operations framework must reflect the new operational workflows, standards and specifications of an improvised warehouse. Three important technology requirements in modern-day warehouses are WMS (Warehouse Management System), warehouse automation, and warehouse analytics.

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Warehouse modernisation is an expensive affair and a long-term investment. This makes proper financial planning and incorporating the scope of future changes a critical requirement in warehouse modernisation projects.

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For [enterprise solutions in warehouse setup](#), management, and modernisation please drop us a message and one of our [warehouse consultants](#) will shortly reach out to you. The service design is executed by a team of veteran warehouse consultants.

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