



## KAPLAN EARLY LEARNING

“In a world where things rarely go as planned, our WMS implementation went exactly as planned. It was on time and on budget, with virtually no disruptions to the business. Moreover, it easily integrates to our ERP system.”

Chris Gerblick,  
VP of IT, Professional Development and Publishing, Kaplan Early Learning

## The Customer

Kaplan Early Learning is a leader in the field of early care and education through its publishing and development of curriculum and assessment products. It specializes in providing products to schools, day cares, preschools, teachers, and parents that lay the foundation for early learning. Additionally, the company has a growing direct-to-consumer business.

Based in Lewisville, NC, Kaplan employees 60 warehouse employees maintain over 10,000 SKUs in their 250,000 square foot facility.

## The Challenge

In the late 1990s, Kaplan Early Learning made the commitment that a well-run DC running on a best-of-breed WMS was a requirement to fully meet customer needs. While many of its customers are large schools with sophisticated DCs, quite often they are smaller schools and daycares. To Kaplan Early Learning, well-organized shipments let the teachers and parents that make up their customer base focus on the most important part of their business – educating children.

Prior to RedPrairie, Kaplan's WMS system functioned, but was not open and offered limited visibility. Cartonization and put away logic were limited. More importantly, it did not integrate well with the company's ERP system. According to Chris Gerblich, VP of IT, Professional Development and Publishing at Kaplan Early Learning, "RedPrairie offered us



RedPrairie's WMS was implemented on time and on budget with virtually no disruptions to their business.

integration between our ERP and their WMS system. RedPrairie's Warehouse Management solution easily interfaces back and forth between the systems allowing us to automate many processes, gain efficiencies, and improve accuracy."

## The Solution

Kaplan Early Learning went live with RedPrairie's WMS in 2004. It was implemented on time and on budget with virtually no disruptions to their business. Kaplan lists five major success criteria for the implementation:

1. Buy in from senior management – The Kaplan Early Learning executive team was committed to making the WMS implementation a success.
2. Selection of RedPrairie – Kaplan said they spent more time on the RFP and requirements process than in the implementation process. According to Gerblich, "Take the time to clearly define what you expect from a vendor and from a system." RedPrairie was selected because of the flexibility and functionality of its WMS, their industry track record, and the experience of their team.
3. Proper staff and resource allocation to the initiative – Kaplan dedicated a team of internal resources to the integration (IT, Purchasing, Finance, Order entry, Receiving, Shipping, and Inventory Control).
4. Limiting customizations – The company prioritized customizations to integrate with their existing Easypick and Sortation systems, but given the standard functionality of the RedPrairie WMS, was able to implement with minimal customizations.
5. Test, test, test – The same team dedicated to the initiative was also on point for testing – along with RedPrairie consultants. This included not just the warehouse testing for receiving, putaway, waves, picking and shipping, but also the integration testing with the ERP system.

## The Results

Since implementation of RedPrairie's Warehouse Management solution, Kaplan Early Learning has been able to ship more products in the same time frame, create more balanced workloads, and improve inventory accuracy. Overall, they are more efficient, especially with putaway, replenishments, and picks than with their previous WMS – all of which is impacting customer service. The RedPrairie solution allows Kaplan more visibility and flexibility to deal with customer exceptions and customer special requests.

Kaplan Early Learning also notes the easy integration between RedPrairie's WMS and their ERP has been a real plus for them. They now have more control of how often they can send orders to the warehouse, wave, ship, and add carriers while keeping their ERP up-to-date during the day.

## For more information

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