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ANATOMY OF A PRODUCT: Footprint® WMS

Engineered for easy, built to adapt and ready for anything

Complex Warehousing Made Surprisingly Simple

Modern warehouses operate under relentless pressure. Demand is unpredictable. Labor is tight, and customers expect fast, flawless fulfillment. For third-party logistics providers (3PLs) and warehouse operators, the challenge isn't just managing inventory. It's in managing complexity across every process, partner, and SKU.

Every day brings new layers of regulation and risk. From U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting to service-level agreements (SLAs) that demand near-perfect accuracy, compliance isn't optional, it's part of daily operations. Disconnected systems and manual workarounds make it harder to maintain accuracy and visibility, and even small service failures can reduce margins, erode trust, and damage brand reputation.

This is the environment Datex® knows best. With decades of operational and software experience, the company helps logistics providers simplify complexity, close visibility gaps, and gain control. Built on that foundation, Footprint® WMS gives warehouse teams the power to move faster, scale smarter, and operate with dramatically less risk.

In this Anatomy of a Product, you'll explore how Footprint WMS helps 3PLs streamline operations through adaptable architecture, real-time visibility, and data-driven control and how customers use it every day to boost accuracy, reduce cost, and grow with confidence.

Markets Shifts Drive New Pressures

The 3PL landscape is changing faster than most operators expected. The e-commerce surge that began years ago accelerated during the pandemic and it hasn't slowed. According to David Castanon, Senior Director of Solutions Architecture at Datex, the shift continues to redefine what customers expect from logistics partners.

"The Amazon boom changed everything," he says. "It forced 3PLs that once focused on pallet-in, pallet-out operations to handle high-volume, each-pick fulfillment. That adds new layers of complexity, from integrating with shopping carts and manifesting systems to keeping data synchronized across multiple platforms."

The pressures extend beyond rising order volume. Labor costs, expanding service expectations, and the demand for end-to-end logistics support are pushing 3PLs to broaden their capabilities. As Castanon notes, "Clients want logistics partners who can handle every touchpoint of the process."

Usability is now a competitive advantage, says Bryan Batchelder, VP of Product at Datex. Footprint WMS was designed with this reality in mind. "Our customers report a dramatic drop in training time from a week or two down to hours," he explains. "For temp workers, a 15- or 20-minute intro is enough. Fewer clicks and a cleaner interface mean fewer errors, helping tackle both labor and accuracy challenges."

Revenue leakage has also become a persistent issue for many 3PLs. Footprint WMS addresses this with a built-in billing engine that captures every billable event in real time. The impact can be immediate. "One client went live and thought something was wrong because invoices jumped 30–40 percent," Batchelder recalls. "They had been underbilling for years and saw ROI in the first month."

For operators like Watco, the payoff is measurable. Justin Marr, VP of business solutions, highlights the platform's ability to give teams confidence and precision: "Footprint WMS enables our operations to grow because of its inventory accuracy, efficiency, transparency, and real-time visibility. Our customers like that."

As fulfillment demands increase, 3PLs need more than basic visibility tools they need a connected, adaptable system that supports growth. Footprint WMS gives operators a complete view of their business in one platform, helping them anticipate issues, protect profitability, and adapt to each client's needs.

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DAVID CASTANON, Senior Director of Solutions Architecture, Datex

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Decades of hands-on experience with 3PL operations shaped how Datex designed Footprint WMS. Warehouse teams need speed, precision, and reliability—not complexity. That operational insight is embedded throughout the platform, which combines scalability, security, and flexibility in a system built for real-world logistics environments.

Footprint WMS transforms complexity into a competitive advantage through real-time visibility, configurable workflows, and seamless integrations. With Datex Studio, the platform's low-code configuration environment, users can tailor screens, build workflows, automate processes, and onboard new clients without writing custom code or waiting on developers.

Castanon describes this as a composable architecture, where every component functions like a building block. "You connect these blocks together to build the application," he explains. "Every process can be tailored to fit the requirements of the operation, whether that is warehouse, client, or even SKU specific, our clients are no longer limited by 'what you see is what you get mentality"

This flexibility enables 3PLs to evolve as fast as their customers. Operators can expand into new regions, add services, and support unique requirements without costly redevelopment. Footprint WMS also strengthens compliance and risk management with an open API framework, extensive audit capabilities, and a cloud-native design that ensures reliability in regulated or high-performance environments.

Datex handles updates differently than most WMS vendors. Instead of modifying source code, Footprint WMS applies customizations as overlays that preserve customer configurations while still enabling upgrades. Batchelder says the approach gives users control without sacrificing innovation. "We give our clients the same tools we use," he notes. "They can modify screens, add fields, or create validation rules without waiting for us." One pharmaceutical customer, for instance, added a DEA tracking field and new compliance limits in under a day.

A fully cloud-native, containerized architecture enhances scale and resilience. Each process runs in its own secure container, allowing teams to deploy updates faster and scale by adding instances rather than hardware. "That design makes Footprint WMS faster to deploy, easier to maintain, and more resilient," Batchelder says.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) also plays a growing role in the platform. Datex uses AI internally to accelerate development and refine feature requirements, and customer-facing AI capabilities are already in progress. These include tools for task orchestration, slotting optimization, and smarter pick path generation, with broader AI-driven enhancements planned across the platform in 2026.

This combination of usability, adaptability, and modern engineering has a direct operational impact. As David Hamilton, VP of GMP Warehousing at Tobin Scientific, notes, "Clients can view their inventory live and see all inbound and outbound movements. We went from turning around an order in two to three hours to processing an order in minutes."

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What Makes Datex & Footprint WMS Different

Not all WMS are created equal The best systems are easy to use, integrate seamlessly across the tech stack, and deliver rock-solid reliability. Footprint WMS checks all of these boxes and more, bringing usability, flexibility and industry specific logic that many platforms lack.

Usability That Speeds Adoption

Footprint WMS places usability at the center. Its streamlined interface and low-code toolset, Datex Studio, lets teams adjust screens, workflows and automation without waiting weeks for a developer or paying for expensive change requests. Operations can update processes quickly as customer requirements shift.

Modern Integration Capabilities

Footprint WMS provides native EDI support across a broad partner network. With an open API and pre-built connectors for eCommerce, ERP, shipping, and automation systems, Datex makes integrations surprisingly simple, reducing manual work and accelerating onboarding.

Recognized Performance in the Midmarket

Gartner named Datex once again as a Notable Vendor in the Midmarket Context: Magic Quadrant™ for Warehouse Management Systems (WMS). Datex believes that Footprint WMS meets Gartner's benchmarks for MSEs, and goes further with capabilities designed for 3PL complexity, including real-time inventory visibility, client-specific workflows, and one of the industry's most advanced billing engines.

Purpose-Built Tools for 3PLs

Client specific workflows, flexible ownership rules, SLA tracking, proactive exception management, predictive cost control and comprehensive, real time visibility help 3PLs manage multi-client environments and profitability without constant workarounds.

Robust Billing Engine

Datex's billing engine handles complex 3PL billing with ease—capturing accessorial charges, splitting costs across entities, supporting tiered volume-based rates, and managing multi-year contracts, while preventing revenue leakage and providing clear, audit-ready visibility.

Customer Portal for 24/7 Visibility

The customer portal gives 3PLs and their customers 24/7/365 visibility and direct access to inventory, orders, and billing details—reducing the load on customer service teams while strengthening the client experience and overall customer satisfaction.

Industry-Specific Capabilities

Footprint WMS includes vertical-specific functionality for industries with strict compliance and traceability requirements, including food, pharmaceuticals, and other regulated goods. This reduces reliance on custom development; rather than forcing businesses to adapt their processes to generic software, Datex adapts to the specific workflows and compliance needs of each vertical. Combined, these capabilities give companies a WMS that meets today's operational demands and supports growth without adding complexity.

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Take Control of Every Step, From Dock to Door

Footprint WMS brings together the connected tools 3PLs need to manage every part of their operation, from inbound receipt through final shipment. Each component is designed to simplify complex workflows, improve accuracy, and keep service levels high.

End-to-End Visibility and Traceability

Footprint WMS captures every movement, lot, batch, and serial number the moment inventory enters the facility. Real-time track-and-trace capabilities give operators full audit readiness and immediate insight across locations, clients, and product types.

Labor Optimization

Built-in labor tools track performance in real time, identify bottlenecks, and prioritize tasks dynamically. Teams can balance workloads, boost productivity, and control labor costs without adding complexity or manual oversight.

> *"We support everything from role-based access control to full audit trails and multi-level serialization for pharmaceutical clients…That level of detail ensures compliance without slowing operations."*

BRYAN BATCHELDER, VP of Product, Datex

Billing Precision

The platform's native billing engine records every activity, task, and service automatically. It supports complex pricing models and customer-specific contract terms, helping 3PLs eliminate revenue leakage and bill with confidence. Many operators see measurable returns within weeks of go-live.

Unified Data and Analytics

Every scan, order, and transaction feeds a single data layer that powers analytics, forecasting, and continuous improvement. By removing silos, operators gain a clear view of performance, cost drivers, and operational trends-helping teams make smarter decisions faster.

Smarter Fulfillment and Storage

Footprint WMS includes intelligent tools that help warehouses work more efficiently:

- Cartonization: Automatically selects the optimal carton size, weight, and configuration to reduce material use and freight spend.
- Inventory Management: Real-time SKU-level tracking, automated replenishment, and guided putaway keep inventory accurate and orders moving.

- Quality Control: Configurable checks and validation rules help teams meet SLAs and compliance standards, with full audit trails and photo/notes capture as needed.

Customer Visibility

Self-service portals and dashboards give clients live access to inventory, order status, and reporting. This transparency reduces the need for calls and emails, strengthens trust, and supports stronger customer relationships.

Cloud-Native Architecture

Powered by Microsoft Azure, Footprint WMS runs in secure, isolated environments engineered for high uptime and rapid scalability. The platform delivers strong performance, data protection, and adaptability as customers grow-without operational disruption.

AI-Driven Optimization

Datex continues to introduce more AI-driven intelligence across Footprint WMS. Emerging capabilities include smarter task direction, improved slotting, and optimized pick paths-making warehouses faster, more accurate, and more efficient.

All of these capabilities integrate through open APIs and native EDI, creating a unified system that connects the entire supply chain. Many customers operate in highly regulated industries, and those requirements are built into the platform. “We support everything from role based access control to full audit trails and multi-level serialization for pharmaceutical clients,” Batchelder explains. “That level of detail ensures compliance without slowing operations.”

This practical approach to compliance is why companies like Tobin Scientific selected Footprint WMS. Their manual, spreadsheet-driven workflows couldn’t meet the real-time visibility or precision their clients required. By implementing Footprint WMS, they replaced manual tracking with automation, live reporting, and a secure client portal-reducing order turnaround from hours to minutes.

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A WMS Built for Companies that Never Stand Still

For 3PLs, visibility, speed, and accuracy define the line between meeting expectations and leading the market. Footprint WMS gives operators the control to do both. By combining data-driven insights, flexible workflows, and built-in compliance, the platform helps providers simplify complex operations without sacrificing agility.

Every component of Footprint WMS is designed with 3PL realities in mind. Its low-code configurability supports rapid onboarding and tailored workflows. Its advanced billing engine uncovers missed revenue and aligns charges with actual activity. And its open integrations ensure that operators can connect to new systems, new services, and new customers without friction.

These capabilities translate directly into measurable results. Universal Warehouse Company, for example, reports nearly perfect accuracy after modernizing its processes. "With Footprint WMS," says Shamila Mustafa, VP of Information Technology, "we've seen almost 99.9% inventory accuracy by scanning and implementing a completely automated warehousing environment."

Datex understands that a WMS is more than a software platform; it is a long term strategic partnership. With decades of experience in third-party logistics, the company continues to evolve Footprint WMS to meet the next generation of challenges head-on, giving customers the tools to stay competitive, strengthen client trust, and scale with confidence.

For warehouse operators ready to simplify operations and deliver greater value to every customer, Footprint WMS provides the foundation to move faster, operate smarter, and grow without limits.

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SHAMILA MUSTAFA,
VP of Information Technology,
Universal Warehouse Company

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The Future of 3PL Operations Starts with Footprint WMS

Complexity isn't going away for 3PLs—if anything, it's accelerating. Customers expect more services, faster turnaround, tighter accuracy, and deeper visibility across every touchpoint. Footprint WMS helps operators meet these demands with the confidence, precision, and flexibility that today's logistics environment requires.

Purpose-built for modern 3PLs and high-performing warehouse operations, Footprint WMS combines real-time insights, adaptable workflows, and enterprise-grade reliability in a single connected platform. It empowers teams to uncover hidden revenue, improve accuracy, reduce risk, and deliver consistently high service levels, even as client expectations and market conditions evolve.

Most importantly, Footprint WMS reflects a long-term partnership mindset. Datex has spent decades working alongside warehouse operators, refining features and capabilities based on real operational challenges. That commitment continues today, with ongoing innovations in AI, automation, and scalability that position customers for the future.

For companies ready to simplify complexity, strengthen client relationships, and grow with confidence, Footprint WMS provides the foundation to move faster and compete more effectively, now and for whatever comes next.

Datex has spent decades working alongside warehouse operators, refining features and capabilities based on real operational challenges. That commitment continues today, with ongoing innovations in AI, automation, and scalability that position customers for the future.

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Ready to deploy your secret weapon?
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