A worker in a warehouse wearing a hard hat and safety vest, holding a tablet. The background shows industrial shelving units filled with boxes.

Case Study: Rebus Labor – Subaru



**Longbow Helps Subaru Better
Manage Labor, Improve Data
Accuracy, and Eliminate Reporting
Issues with Rebus Labor**

Subaru builds cars in the U.S. and Japan. Like many auto manufacturers, the parts that become Foresters, BRZ's and WRZ's and other models are sourced from outside the country. Once those parts reach regional U.S. distribution centers, they need to be checked in, put away, and then routed to Subaru retailers and ports in the U.S. and Canada.

High demand and tight timelines for shipping the right parts from the multiple buildings that comprise a regional distribution center put a lot of pressure on Subaru's warehouse management and labor management systems. Unfortunately, the WMS and LMS solution that Subaru was using wasn't operating "holistically". Although they both were from the same provider, some features of the version that was installed created issues with accuracy when data from the WMS was moved into the LMS. The visibility required to understand what was happening with resources across



all operations, down to the lines/hour and orders/hour detail, was insufficient.

In addition to the integration issues, "Exporting data was a challenge because there were too many steps involved," explained Regional Distribution Center Manager Sean Gordon. Plus, cumbersome reporting on labor productivity was making it difficult to guide new and temporary employees, who benefit from daily coaching.

A Methodical Approach to Solving Specific Operation Challenges

Looking to get the data they needed out of the WMS to support their labor management needs and take the headache out of reporting, Subaru engaged Longbow.

Step one was for Longbow to get a clear understanding of their problems with accuracy and multiple daily reports. Longbow assigned a team that got to know key stakeholders as well as business operations. Meeting on a regular basis, stakeholders from Subaru identified key issues; Longbow's team responded with options for solving those problems. "Longbow's team listened to our concerns and were truthful about what they could and couldn't do," said Gordon.

Longbow replaced Subaru's Legacy LMS application with Rebus Labor, a cloud-based solution with a lower total cost of ownership that leverages transactional data from Subaru's WMS allowing it to measure its performance and labor utilization in real-time. After running both systems for a short time, they "turned off" the old system and transitioned full to Rebus Labor. While overall a smooth migration, as you would expect with an integration of this complexity, can create unforeseen glitches.

Longbow's team then rolled out a series of custom widgets, each designed to meet specific labor performance objectives. Taking an agile development approach to the implementation, by building out analysts and reporting capabilities in response to Subaru's specific business objectives.

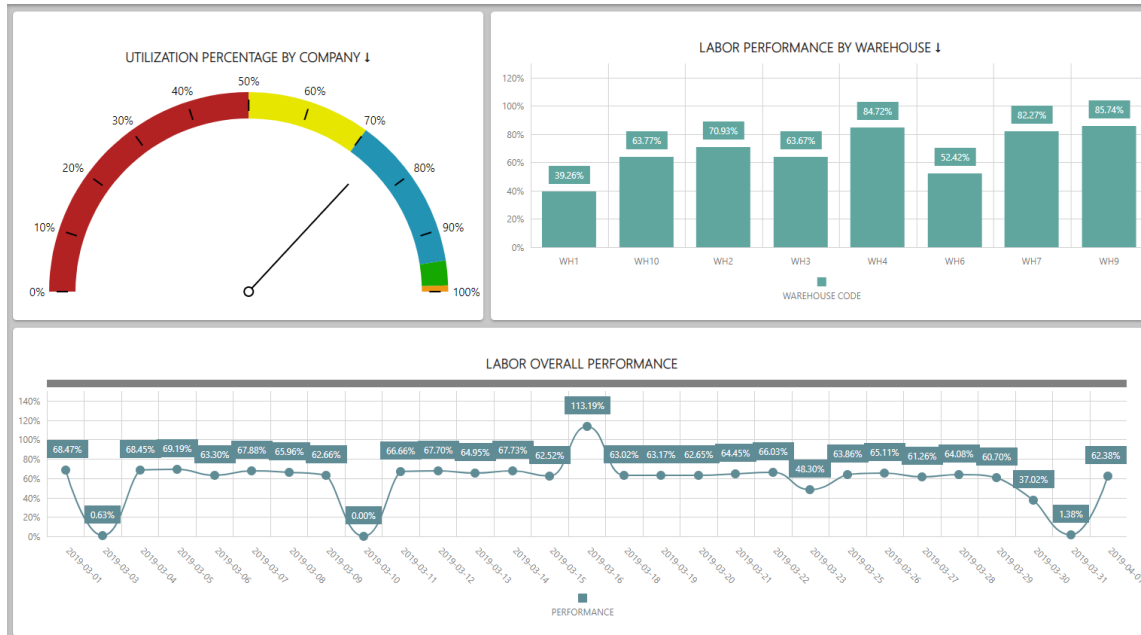


“If we saw something ‘weird,’ all I had to do was pick up the phone and get in touch with either my internal team or assigned Longbow Labor Engineer. The next day or next week, the problem was gone.”

- Sean Gordon, Regional Distribution Center Manager, Subaru

Concrete Total Cost Savings and Unexpected, “Soft” Advantages

Forecasting has improved. Using historical data as a starting point, Gordon can now adjust staffing based on recent and current, ever-changing demand. That's important for any business but critical for Subaru, a company experiencing exceptionally strong increases in sales. With Rebus, they can more efficiently ship urgent deliveries and, simply put, "get more parts in and out the door".



Intuitive reports eliminate confusions for department supervisors and associates. Gordon says that instead of having to walk through a report, they understand how to read it and can easily see where they are succeeding and failing short. It's also easier to identify performance differences between the varying areas of the distribution center, pinpoint what is working better in one area and apply that knowledge.

"It's flexible, accurate, and easy to use; You set your widget up, put your criteria in, choose the date range you want, then boom, you got it."

- Sean Gordon, Regional Distribution Center Manager, Subaru

What might be considered soft, yet significant total cost of operations reductions. First, Subaru's IT department is not getting calls from their operations supervisors, and so they can focus on core business operations instead of solving system integration issues. Training on the platform is easier; Gordon says that "It is so much easier to train new employees on this system. It takes just a couple of hours to grasp how to use it."

Employees have benefited as well. The accuracy Rebus Labor provides ensures that payroll is 100% accurate. The system also helps Subaru's management team recognize employees that are meeting and exceeding performance expectations, which creates loyalty that results in worker satisfaction and retention.

When asked to sum up his partnership and service experience Gordon says:
"Longbow has exceeded my expectations. If I have a request for a new report. It's never no. They are always willing to create new reports in Rebus Labor that meet our needs."



About Longbow

At Longbow, our goal is to be your best distribution technology option in the industry. We have worked with some of the largest global companies across industry sectors specializing in warehouse and labor management system implementations and take pride in our work, achieving a 2018 Net Promoter Score of 86. With over 15 years of experience, there aren't too many distribution problems or system challenges we haven't seen – and Solved!

Our Services:



WMS Implementation

Flexible environment that delivers exactly what you need: simplicity, agility, and results.



WMS & LMS Upgrades

We know all the challenges and can deliver a seamless transition from your old system to new.



WMS & LMS Training

Adoption rates for new technology can make or break your investment. We can train your staff to utilize the full potential.



LMS Implementation

Optimize your warehouse efficiency to positively impact your growth, profit, and customer experience



Hosting

We provide the highest level of service for full hosting capabilities, for both test and production environments



Project Management

We help you anticipate and avoid complications at each point of your project lifecycle.



System Integrations

Integrate your new WMS or LMS to ensure effective communications with your host system and specialized applications



Technical Expertise

Solutions are not one size fits all. Technical experts allow you to tailor your application to fit your specific business needs.



Consulting Services

With a flexible approach, we gauge your current IT infrastructure and needs, improve your overall business efficiency, and mitigate any potential risks.

Longbow Advantage, INC.
555 Briarwood Circle, Suite 118
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

info@longbowadvantage.com
www.longbowadvantage.com
(734) 929-1230 x346

