

imio  
software solutions



Pets at Home  
supports growth with  
warehouse update.

“ We have a really good working relationship with Conveyor Networks and imio Software Solutions. The project at our distribution centre in Stoke involved delivering modifications to our existing conveyor system, and the team did this both on time and within the agreed budget. ”

*Ben Ainsworth, Facilities Manager at Pets at Home.*



In 2017, the UK's largest retailer of pets supplies, Pets at Home commissioned imio Software Solutions to update its legacy control system and WMS interfaces at its Stoke Distribution Centre (DC).



Driven by successful and consistent growth, Pets at Home needed to improve the efficiency and visibility of the control system responsible for tote sortation.

## The Approach

Traditionally, Pets at Home's distribution network was managed by its Stoke warehouse, which became operational in 2003. At the time that imio got involved, the DC was still using the original controls system with JDA's Warehouse Management System (WMS), which was proving costly. This alongside the opening of a new distribution centre in Northampton in 2009, resulted in a decision to embrace a new multi-channel strategy.

Pets at Home's took the strategic decision to embrace a 'bricks and clicks' approach. The company's in-house fleet, manages the majority of the retailer's click and collect orders to store, whereas home deliveries are handled by external carriers. imio-MFC allows orders to be tracked and traced across all three of Pets at Home delivery channels.

## System Delivered

imio MFC software acts as middleware between the critical host and machine automation systems.

**The SCADA interface was replaced with imio-MFC**, a bespoke software interface that enables the PLC to route totes to the correct zones.

**imio-MFC instructs the PLC** which way to send each tote.

**The PLC monitors the route** of the totes using barcode scanning.

**imio-MFC collects data** from the PLC and sends it back to the WMS confirming the action.

**imio-MFC also collects data from each barcode scan and provides a report.** This has the advantage that Pets at Home can trace the totes much more closely and can also tell if any scanners are being problematic.

## Results

Pets at Home was able to;

**Keep its original conveyor layout** and barcode readers

**Simplify** its software systems architecture

**Improve efficiency**

**Gain more insight** into how its hardware and automation performs

**Save money** on its annual licence and software support costs

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