

## WHITEPAPER

Royal road to WMS replacement - industry trends  
and an individual roadmap



STUDY RESULTS,  
BEST PRACTICE AND TIPS

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## 1 Introduction

Warehouse management systems (WMS) are designed to make workflows cost-efficient and transparent and to continuously optimize warehouse processes. However, they cannot always fulfill this claim. Whether missing functions, lack of integration or insufficient support: The reasons why warehouse operators are dissatisfied with their existing WMS can be manifold. Often, business processes or performance requirements in the company also change. In all these cases, the following consideration is central: How do you proceed if you want to replace or upgrade your existing WMS? And is it worth it at all?

These questions are answered in this white paper. Findings from a Unitechnik survey show the optimization potential of many companies in terms of warehouse management systems. Reasons for and against a replacement project are shown. Which criteria are relevant when selecting software and providers? Rounded off by a comprehensive step-by-step guide, the white paper shows how WMS replacements can be implemented in the best possible way.



*The WMS is the central point for the management of all logistic processes. © Unitechnik*

## 2 Initial situation: Do German logistics companies want to replace their WMS?

Replacing the existing WMS can be a solution for many warehouses. But at the same time, there are numerous fears that make companies shy away from a change. This can be the fear of start-up problems or downtimes in intralogistics. But also the idea that the changeover process is intransparent and too lengthy tempts those responsible to delay a change or not to carry it out at all. Unitechnik has asked specifically: In the survey "Is the replacement of the warehouse management system worth it?" among around 60 participants from different industries in July 2021, the current mood has crystallized.

### 2.1 Trends: Optimization potential in the warehouse

The result of the survey: even though two-thirds of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with their current WMS, 72 percent of companies would like to make adjustments in the short to medium term. Half of them already have concrete plans to change or upgrade their WMS.

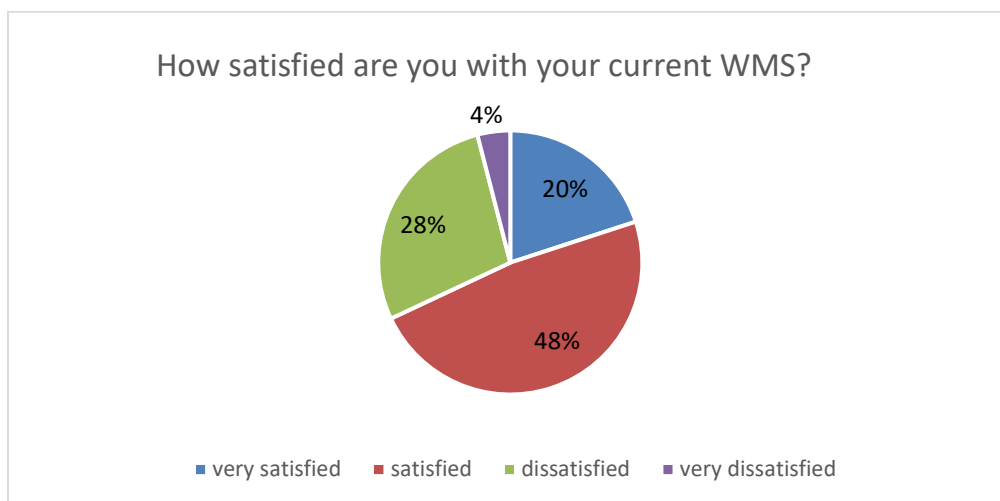


Fig. 1: Satisfaction of the companies with their current WMS. © Unitechnik



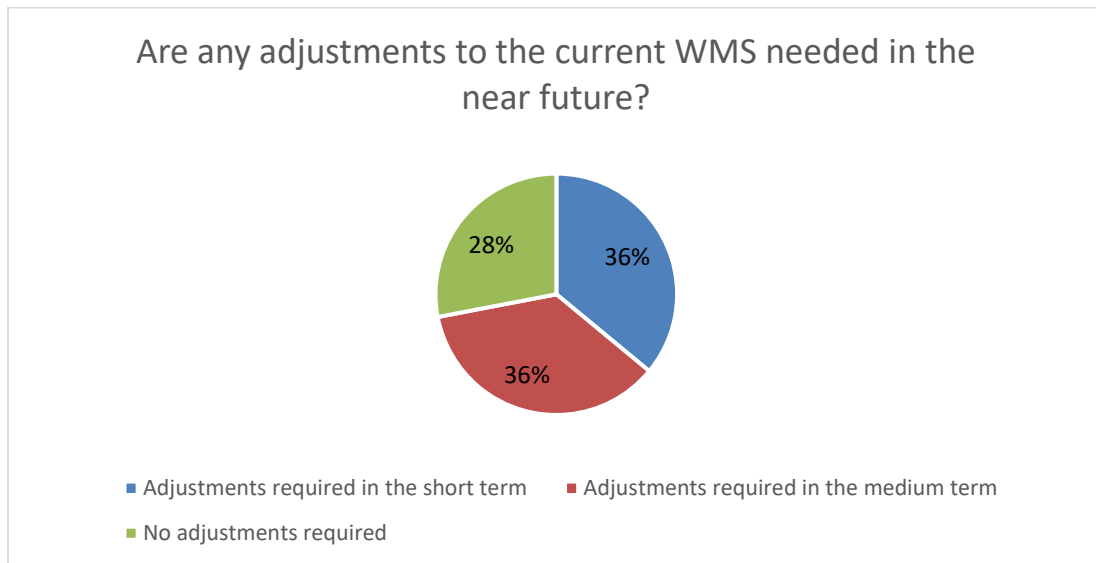


Fig. 2: Necessity of adjustments to the current WMS. © Unitechnik

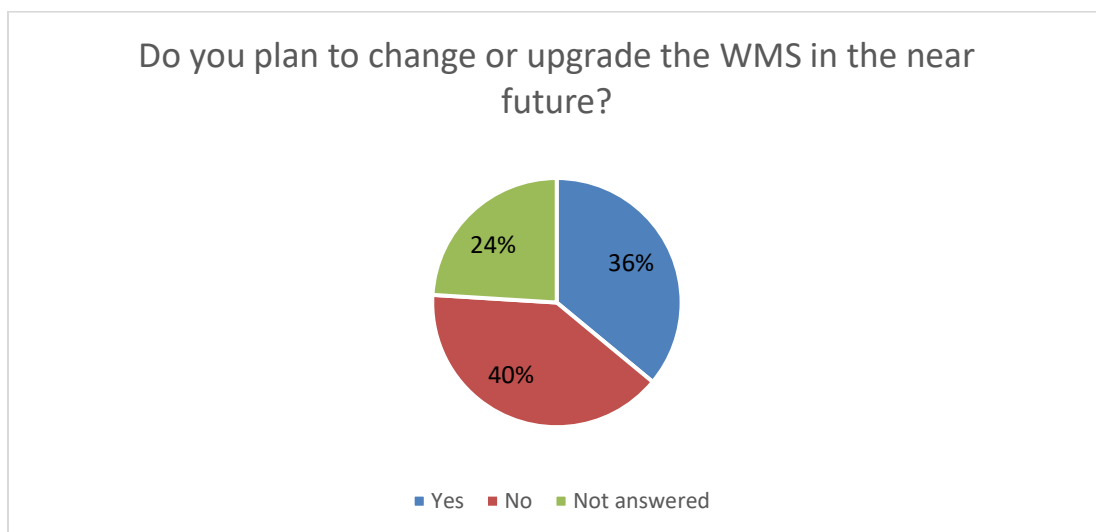


Fig. 3: Willingness to change or upgrade the WMS. © Unitechnik

## 2.2 Overview: What types of WMS do companies use?

We consider four different types of warehouse management systems.

### **LVS function in an ERP system**

No explicit WMS system is used. To manage the warehouse, one uses functionalities of the ERP system such as SAP ERP, Microsoft Dynamics or Infor. With increasing requirements in intralogistics, companies are often faced with the question of whether it makes sense to have customer-specific modules programmed within the ERP system or rather to introduce an explicit WMS system.

### **Standard WMS as out-of-the-box software**

The most cost-effective variant of an WMS system is the standard software. It has a predefined range of functions. Customer-specific adaptations are not provided for. The logistics processes of the operator must adapt to the functionality of the software. The integration of automated systems is often not provided for.

### **Standardized WMS with flexible customization**

This is a software that has all the basic functions of an WMS. In addition, it is intended to make customer-specific changes and additions.

### **Highly individualized WMS**

In this class of WMS systems, the share of individual programming predominates.

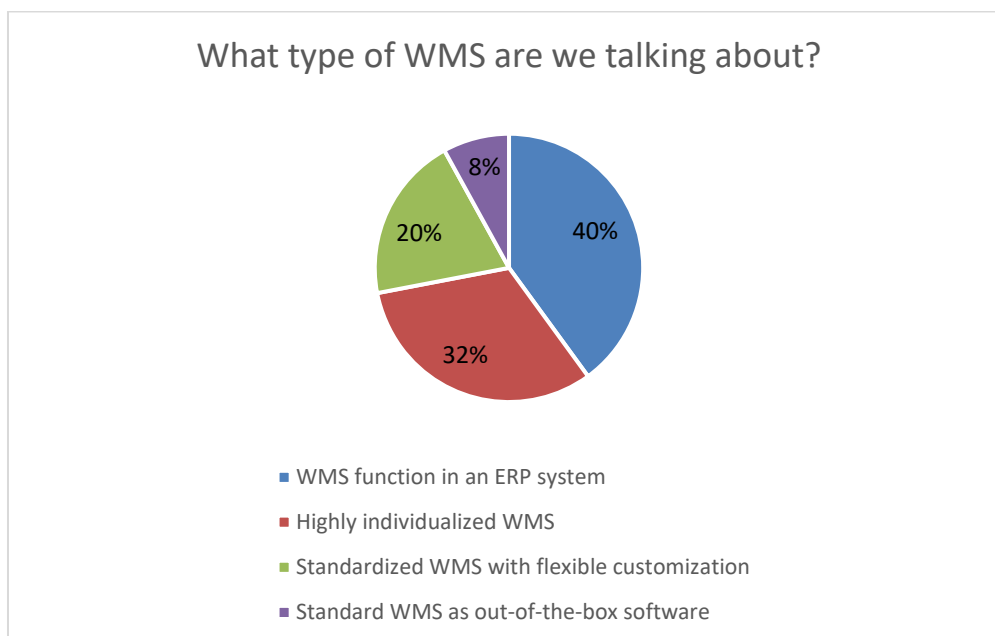


Fig. 4: Type of WMS in use. © Unitechnik