



## What does one key stroke cost your operation?

By **Robert Kennedy**,  
Vice President, Business Development

Each and every day you watch as your workforce performs their jobs, checking in new receipts, stocking material, picking, packing and shipping. And you know that every day they commit the same transactions using the same screens and hitting the same set of keys.



You also realize, though you probably don't give it much thought, that almost every one of them at some point during their routine, hits the dreaded "Tab" key. Why? Because there is a field on the screen that you don't use; that is part of the standard vendor release because that software was designed for universal use, across customers, across industries. You might not even know what the field is for? But every day, on every one of those transactions, you skip over that particular field to get to the next one, the one you do use.

While you know skipping the unused field is a slight pain, you have to live with it because the cost and priority of changing the software to personalize it just so you can eliminate that field, is not going to happen. In the grand scheme of things, it's not a big deal. You have plenty of bigger fish to fry. What does it take to tab across the field anyway? A second? Not worth it. Right?

Or is it? Have you tried to quantify what that little unused field is costing you? Let's do a quick exercise.

<b>Picks per hour per picker</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Hours</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>Total picks per day</b>	<b>375</b>
<b>Picker hourly rate (w/overhead)</b>	<b>\$25</b>

Suppose you pay your piece pick workforce \$25 (full cost) per hour and they are actively working 7.5 hours. For easy math, suppose it

takes a single second to hit the tab key and move the cursor to where you want it. And, let's suppose an average worker commits that transaction 50 times per hour. The data would then look like this:

- **Eliminating just one keystroke from a single pick transaction using the profile above means eliminating 375 seconds, or 6 minutes and 15 seconds from each picker:**
- **Rounding down, at \$25 an hour, those six minutes equate to about \$2.50 a day for each picker. Not much to bother with right?**
- **With a staff of 10 pickers the savings add up to \$25 per day.**

Still in the noise range.

But, what if you apply the same logic to every other area of the warehouse? How many times do your forklift drivers hit the tab? Packers? Receivers? Returns? What about the second and third shift?

Think about a medium sized warehouse with about 50 people:

- If you can eliminate one tab skip for each of the 50 workers that equates to \$125 per day.

- Over a year, working 255 days that equates to just under \$32,000, which is nearly what a picker is costing you.

That is just considering one keystroke. What if every worker has to tab skip two fields? Three? Like they say, a dollar here a dollar there, pretty soon you are talking real money. And it's all because of a few extra keystrokes.

Is that enough to take on the challenge of changing screens? Like I said earlier, probably not. Probably you will acquiesce to the extra cost because you don't have much ability to change it. But what if you did? What if it was easy to change that screen so that you could eliminate the extra tabs? What if you could "personalize" your screens to make them look like you want them to, not how the vendor needs them to? What if you could do it quickly, and inexpensively?

Having a software tool that you can use to replace existing screens, so that you CAN personalize them to do EXACTLY what you want. Personalizing your operation with a software development platform that easily integrates with your existing WMS so that you can create your own screens, your own workflows, and do so without having to change core code. And doing it yourself rather than adding it to the already long list that IT has or the expense of having the vendor make the change, makes it all that more appealing.



That's what STEPLogic is all about. It's easy to use, quick, and therefore less expensive than traditional software development. STEPLogic enables you to move down into the "noise" level and eliminate those extra pain points, making your team incrementally better. A couple of keystrokes?

**That's just a simple illustration of what STEPLogic enables you to do.**

Imagine having the ability to create alternate RF streams for you temporary or seasonal workforce that include more checks and prompts to help move them along the learning curve with fewer mistakes. Or, how about the ability to quickly change instructions for your packers to stay current with new promotions, new inserts or custom labeling. The power of the platform gives you the ability to create entire new processes, create new screens and even create a new GUI that is personalized to your ever-changing operational needs and to your workforce.

Your big challenges will likely get the attention they need; the capital and resources to address them. But there is a lot of hidden cost in those small pain points, like one extra tab key! What other pain points are you living with day in and day out?

STEPLogic can provide the relief to take them on, empowering you to do it yourself.

#### About the Author

For more than 30 years, Bob Kennedy has planned, developed and implemented leading-edge supply chain execution systems around the globe. Bob has led more than 100 large-scale implementations of WMS in more than 15 countries and a variety of industries. He has earned an industry reputation for quality and a track record of successes. Bob is a partner at DMLogic, a team of WMS experts who provide services, support and WMS products. He is a member of MHI and CSCMP, and is a frequent presenter at conferences including ProMat, MODEX and WERC and CSCMP. Bob has a BS in Industrial Management from Carnegie-Mellon University.



661 Andersen Drive, Foster Plaza 7, Pittsburgh, PA 15220  
412.458.4010 sales@dmlogicllc.com  
www.dmlogicllc.com