

2-MINUTE OVERVIEW

Leading Grocer Realizes Dramatic Employee Productivity Gains



Features/Benefits Included:

- Reduced manual pallet moves by 50 percent
- Provided 2 year ROI
- Reduced staffing for all 3 shifts
- Eliminated pallet replenishment interference with pick operators

This customer wanted to improve its responsiveness and reduce warehouse operation costs. To accomplish these long-term goals, teams from the customer and supplier collaborated to evaluate the feasibility of a new automated distribution center.

Using a Rotating Fork SRM design, the supplier afforded this customer the access flexibility of pick faces, storage, dock doors, and the space to perform their day-to-day operations with less overhead.

The 1.3 million square foot facility with 77 aisles of Automated Storage and Retrieval System (AS/RS) handles perishable and grocery products. This one of a kind facility, operating 24 x 7, is the most advanced automated grocery store distribution center in North America, storing over 64,000 pallets of product.

Inbound pallets are brought from trucks to the AS/RS via WMS-directed fork trucks. The operator places the pallet on one of three levels of pickup and delivery (P&D) stands at the receiving end of each aisle. The WMS system alerts the supplier's

Equipment Management Software (EMS) of the inbound pallet; the SRM moves the pallet into a selected storage location. EMS also receives requests for the SRM to replenish the floor level pick slots in each aisle and to perform empty pallet takeaways. Full pallet retrieval and empty pallet stack removal are accomplished at the shipping end of the system by the SRM as well.

Alternating with each SRM aisle is a pick aisle where operators pick cases to motorized pallet jacks to fulfill orders. The pick instructions and responses are conducted via a voice activated interface to the WMS.

The new facility handles 40 percent more volume compared to the old one. However, the work force did not increase from the previous facility, a reflection of dramatic productivity gains.



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