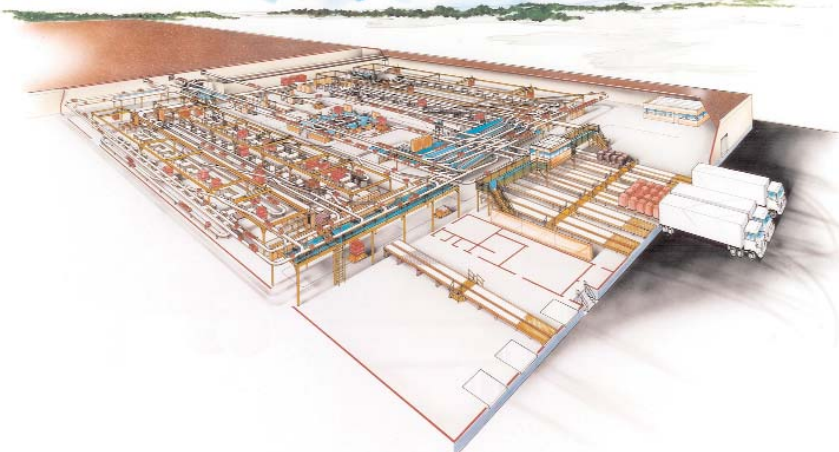


2-MINUTE OVERVIEW

Leading U.S. Tobacco Manufacturer Uses Automation to Manage SKU Proliferation

Features/Benefits Provided:

- Allowed for 200% increased SKU handling
- Allowed any case to be handled by any of 96 palletizing positions
- Provided continuous operational support for manufacturing



A leading U.S. Tobacco manufacturer was faced with compelling business environment changes. Consumers were looking for more cigarette brand choices at the same time that overseas markets were emerging. Further, consolidation of cigarette manufacturing operations was needed into the two remaining domestic facilities. All these factors resulted in the need to handle a significant increase in SKUs. After extensive supplier analysis, the manufacturer decided to expand production by remissioning existing space. A project mandate was that the material flow's design needed to be flexible for continuing SKU growth.

The supplier's scope of work included general construction for the site renovation. Also serving as systems integrator, the supplier was further responsible for providing:

- new case and pallet conveyor installation
- gantry robotic palletizing system
- automated guided vehicle (AGV) system
- human machine interface (HMI) software controls
- pallet stretchwrapper installation

This flexible conveyor design allowed any case to go to any of 96 palletizing positions.

- auto truck loading/unloading system
 - existing conveyor controls retrofit
- Three input conveyor lanes move product into the palletizing center. Using five sorters and a series of merges and crossovers, the cases are sorted based on a pseudo code and palletizing cell allocation for routing to one of eight conveyor loops for automatic palletizing.

Each case conveyor loop has twelve conveyor spurs for a total of 96 distinct palletizing cells. The cases are automatically pulled onto the correct spur by an electric puller. The electric puller assists in properly positioning the case for pickup by the overhead gantry robotic palletizer.



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