



Parts Distribution Center Uses Horizontal Carousels to Increase Throughput by 344%

Features and Benefits

Orders Delivered to Customers Within 12 Hours

344% Increase in Picking Rate

Line Items Picked per Day Increased 33%

58% Of The Facilities Inventory Is In The Carousel System

Industry Group: Order Fulfillment Solutions (OFS)



A significant growth in sales presented a Canadian parts distributor with a challenge: an increase in orders meant they needed to process orders faster. To answer their customers' demands and provide faster delivery they installed eight horizontal carousels in their 96,000 square foot warehouse. This allowed them to achieve an increase of 33% in the lines picked per day.

Orders Delivered to Customers within 12 Hours

Previously the warehouse had used an 8 lane, rail guided mini-load AS/RS. "As picking volume increased over the years, productivity fell because too many man hours were being wasted waiting to retrieve and replenish parts. Parts couldn't be picked fast enough at peak times," commented the Distribution Center Manager. Now that the distribution center has installed eight horizontal carousels dual tiered into two pods using a mezzanine, parts are picked and delivered to branches within 12 hours.

Carousels Provide 344% Increase in Picking Rate

The horizontal carousels store 58% of the distribution center's parts, which equates to 32,000 line items. The facility averages 4,200 line items per day with peaks as high as 5,000. Of the line items, 48% are picked from the carousels at an average rate of 200 lines an hour. This is a 344% increase

over the picking rate from the previous equipment, of only 45 lines an hour. To speed carousel picking and enhance worker ergonomics the highest volume parts are stored in the golden zone.

14 Orders Picked Simultaneously

With the increased efficiency that the system provides, “Only two pickers man the carousels, one up and one down”. Up to 14 orders are simultaneously picked from the carousels. With the use of pick to light technology the operator is directed to the exact bin location and the quantity is displayed. Orders are placed in corrugated totes at the workstation and put lights direct the operator to place the correct quantity of parts in each tote. “The carousel system’s picking rate is high compared to the AS/RS mini-load we used before, because parts are brought to the picker rather than the picker traveling to the parts,” noted the Distribution Center Manger.

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