

Reconditioned carousel supports booming e-commerce business

Distributor saves space and time with light-directed, goods-to-person solution.

Green Supply is a Missouri-based distributor of hunting, fishing and outdoors goods. Following a large bump in online and other direct ship orders through the late 2000s, the company struggled to handle additional SKUs. Additionally, a run on ammunition purchases that began in 2011 has not stopped. In an effort to increase cubic capacity, particularly in the "case-in, each-out" format, the company installed a light-

directed, goods-to-person carousel.

The facility required an each pick solution that would reduce information transfer and materials handling steps to reduce order processing times, particularly in the one line and small order categories. Efficient data entry and document printing processes were developed that eliminate virtually all previous manual set up processes. The new carousel presented a way to directly transfer order data to

pick-and-pack methods tied directly to shipping and current next-day shipping options.

The company began with one carousel pod of four horizontal carousels, each roughly 50 feet long, 12 feet tall and with bins 2 feet wide and 2 feet deep. An elevating work platform maximizes warehouse clear height. The supplier's control software receives prioritized client orders from the order entry system and returns results for status updates over the network, eliminating labor required for manual printing, bursting, sortation and data entry for each shift.

Light trees point operators to their next pick, telling them how many to grab, supported by a sort bar system that directs operators to the particular client order assembly tote for each item. The paperless system increased storage capacity and simplified the order assembly and shipping process.

In less than a year, the company ordered a second pod, with a third installed roughly six months after that.

"We were able to complete the transformation on a tight budget," says William Green, president of Green Supply. "The key was transferring and upgrading pre-owned carousel technology without compromise to product quality and technical skill."

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