



thespeedchallenge

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Going with the flow

Since installing a pick module equipped with efficient flow racks, computer component supplier WYNIT has been winning business.

IN THIS WORLD OF EVER-INCREASING COMPETITION, A WHOLESALE must be able to respond quickly to stay ahead. That is especially true for companies selling technologies that are constantly evolving. It's not just speed that's important, but also accuracy, versatility and an overall satisfactory customer experience.

WYNIT is a wholesaler representing top suppliers of consumer electronics, computer peripherals and other high-tech products. The company sells everything from large printers and flat panel displays to papers, inks and small electronics. Its customers range from national big box retailers and office supply stores to smaller, independent resellers.

The New York-based company has experienced so much growth in recent years that its distribution centers could not meet projected demand. As a result, in 2005 WYNIT added a new DC in Memphis to better serve customers in the Central U.S. In establishing this new 100,000-square-foot facility, the company strove to be even more productive, as well as to offer a better customer experience.

Speed is essential for WYNIT, as nearly all orders are processed the same day with next-day customer delivery. The chief way WYNIT was able to achieve greater speed in the new facility was by erecting a two-level pick module. The module is equipped with Dura-Flo carton flow and pallet flow tracks from Creative Storage Systems. The track systems were very easy to install, as the pre-assembled tracks easily drop into the racking. They can also be retro-fitted into existing racks. The sturdy flow tracks, made of heavy-gauge steel, also require virtually no maintenance. These new flow systems have allowed more products to be stored in a denser footprint and have greatly improved productivity at WYNIT.

"The system is geared for high velocity," says George Yarbber, distribution manager. "We take our top 100 highest-moving SKUs and place them in the flow racks." He adds that the items put into the racks are adjusted daily based on order profiles. The versatile flow racks allow a wide range of products to be handled there quickly. "In this business, we have new products all of the time, so we always have to change our processes," Yarbber explains. "The

flow racks are more user-friendly than manual shelving, and they allow workers to concentrate better. It is just more compact and you can get a lot more done there."

Designed for speed

The pick module at the Memphis DC consists of pallet flow tracks on the bottom level and carton flow tracks on the upper level. The durable pallet flow tracks can hold products four pallets deep in each of the 69 lanes, which are easily replenished from the back of the racks. Pallets rest on durable engineered plastic resin wheels that rely on gravity to index them forward as products are consumed. Full cartons are quickly picked by labels, with workers placing them onto a conveyor belt that runs through both levels of the module.



On the upper level, individual items are selected from cases in the Dura-Flo carton flow tracks. Managers can easily adjust pick zones and re-slot products within the zones as

needed for even greater productivity and inventory control. Radio frequency directs fast picking of items from the 600 Dura-Flo flow locations. The wide-diameter wheels of the flow tracks bring products forward where workers can easily and ergonomically reach them. Products are scanned as they are picked into order cartons. Completed orders are placed onto the takeaway conveyor for transport to manifest and packing stations.

Since the facility moved to the flow-equipped modules, pick rates have more than doubled. Picking accuracy has improved to 99.93%.

"It has been very productive. Travel time is reduced and throughput has increased," says Yarbber. "We now have less handling and less chance for errors. Customer service is a key in this type of business. We have to get orders out quickly and this equipment lets us do that."

For more information on Creative Storage Systems, call (770) 514-0711 or visit www.creativestorage.com.

To watch a short video showing the distribution operations at WYNIT, go to www.dcvelocity.com and click on The SPEED Challenge.