

'47® Brand, a premier sports lifestyle brand that manufactures sports headwear and apparel, recently transitioned from a labor intensive manual operation to an automated system.

Challenges

'47 Brand had an interest in streamlining operations, automating the picking system, and addressing concerns regarding location tracking and delivery recording. Where they had previously just assigned additional workers to unload and put away large shipments, '47 Brand is now looking to streamline operations by introducing automation, software and controls.



Containers were unloaded by hand and bulk stored on the floor in designated areas. There was no system in place to track a specific product's location or a system to direct pickers on an optimal pick path, as a result, the entire order picking process was inefficient.

Solution

After a thorough selection process, '47 Brand chose to partner with Abel Womack to design, engineer and implement a fully-customized solution for their receipt, put-away, picking, packing and shipping operation. In an effort to increase efficiency, conveyor systems were installed to handle inbound loads and delivery of completed orders to manifest stations. A Warehouse Management Software (WMS)/ Warehouse Management Controls Software (WMCS) system was implemented to control orders sent down from the ERP system.

Incoming cartons are now routed via a conveyor system to their storage zone, completed orders are pushed onto the take-away conveyor and delivered to the shipping station

where the completed orders are packaged, sealed and labeled. The shipper places the completed orders onto the sortation system where the Warehouse Controls System (WCS) reads the barcode on the label and diverts the carton down the appropriate shipping lane.

47® Brand Challenges

- Manual picking, storage & transporting processes
- Inefficient order fulfillment

Abel Womack Solution

- Zone Routed Conveyor system
- WMS/WCS
- Carton flow pick module
- Sortation system

Benefits

- Increased picking efficiencies and throughput
- Improved order fulfillment
- Maximized storage density

In addition to the put-away functionality of inbound packages, a new spur to the conveyor line allows 47 Brand to replace the current process of palletizing rear-warehouse packages and manually transporting them to the manifest stations located in the front of the warehouse.

Results

By incorporating pallet rack and carton flow in a narrow aisle configuration to maximize storage density, integrating a zone routing conveyor system for automation, and having a robust WMS/WCS controlling the warehouse operation, '47 Brand has greatly increased their system-wide visibility, traceability and productivity—without any increase in head count.



"The Abel Womack team was great to work with and their automated solution helped transform our operation," said Mike Foley, Warehouse Manager. "The biggest improvements we've achieved have been an efficient flow of materials and more than doubling the speed of moving inbound and outbound products."