UNEX CASE STUDY

customer: NATIONAL FOOD WHOLESALER

operation: Grocery distributor

goal: Maximize use of picking space

solution: Pick Tunnel Carts from UNEX

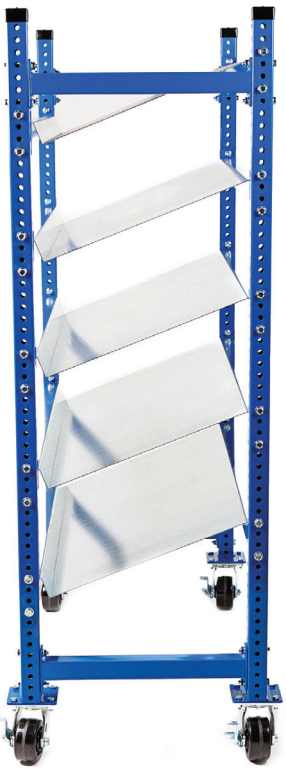
The Path to Higher Productivity

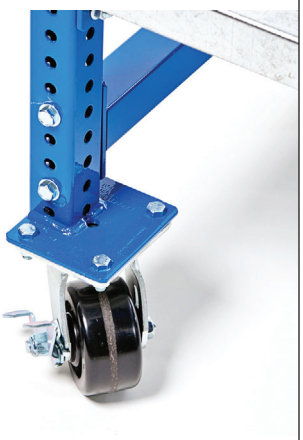
More SKUs in the Pick Path and Fewer Footsteps Result in Dramatic Efficiencies for National Distributor

Workers at a national distributor of food products have reduced travel time on the pick path by 80%, reduced pick time by 42% and freed up 456 pallet positions. How did they do it? With innovative storage solutions and pick tunnel carts from UNEX.

Too Many SKUs Going Askew

The distributor was faced with a great problem – explosive growth. Unfortunately, the proliferation of SKUs was wreaking havoc on productivity. To create space, slow moving items were taken away from the pick aisle and shoved in corners on shelves here and there, requiring workers to leave the pick line to retrieve items.







"The number one time waster in order picking is footsteps," says Mark Neuwirth, UNEX Vice President. "Leaving the pick line also wastes energy and jeopardizes the accuracy of the pick."

Activating SKUBE

The distributor turned to UNEX for help. "It was time for the customer to rethink the warehouse," says Brian Neuwirth, UNEX President. "We had just the tool to get the job started."

The UNEX team deployed SKUBE, UNEX's proprietary software that analyzes an operation's inventory and assigns products to the correct storage medium.

"SKUBE analyzed the movement of products so we could understand which items should be assigned to pallets, carton flow or shelving units," says Mark. "The analysis was the first important step to getting things in order."

The 'Tunnel' Vision

Once the right medium for storage was assigned to each product, the team set out to redesign the pick line. The UNEX team created a new pick line that intermixed pallet positions, carton flow and shelving. The team incorporated shelving into the existing pallet rack layout by removing the beams from the ground floor positions on selected bays, creating a walkthrough within the pallet rack.

The team then installed mobile shelving units within these walkthroughs, and the shelving has become known as ***"Pick Tunnel Carts."***

The mobile pick tunnel carts are loaded off line and moved into the pallet rack bays in the pick area. The new configuration eliminated the need to travel up to an additional 500 feet per order to pick the slow moving product from the shelving in the storage areas.

The pick line redesign improved productivity and provided huge space savings. "The same pallet footprint that once held only 4 SKUs could now fit 28 SKUs per bay with the carton flow setup and 80 SKUs with the shelving system," says Brian. "One of our goals was to maximize space at the facility, and getting each product into the most efficient storage medium allowed us to do that."

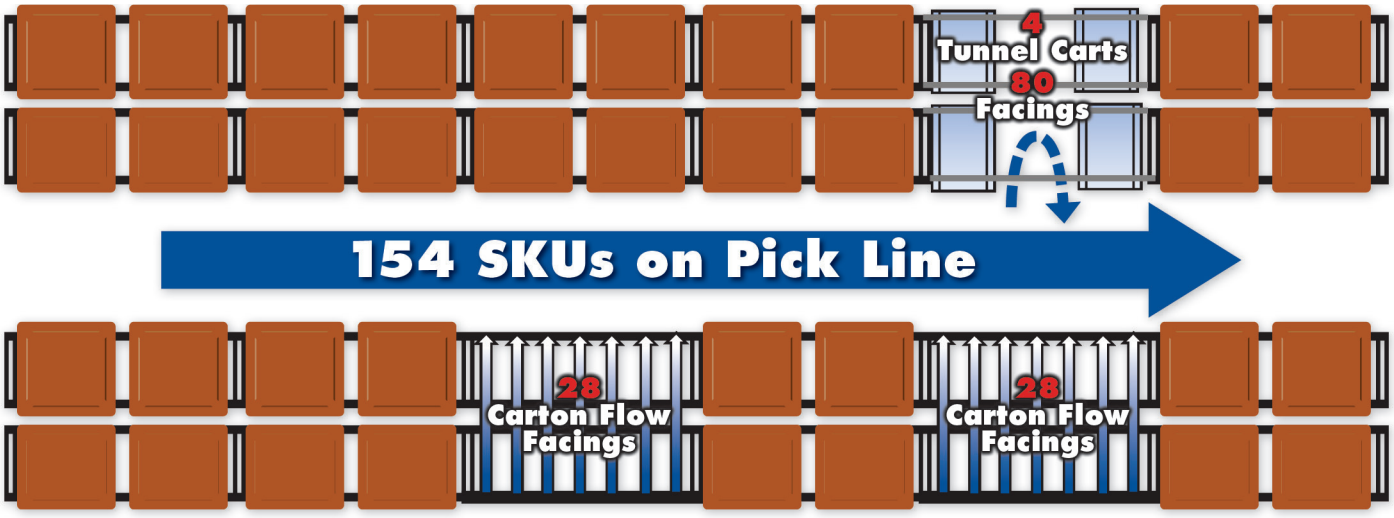
– BEFORE –

Standard floor pallet pick line - picking from 7 bays of floor pick pallets.



– AFTER –

Integrating Pick Tunnel Carts for slow moving items, Carton Flow for medium moving items and floor pallet picks for fast moving items.



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