

# 5 Ways to Improve Order Fulfillment

Kardex Remstar, LLC



A new white paper from Kardex Remstar now available for download reviews 5 order improvement strategies. There's always room for improvement in a picking operation — whether it's faster throughput, optimized labor productivity, increased accuracy, improved space utilization or better accommodation of demand spikes.

### **Faster Throughput**

Batch picking groups together orders with common items, while inventory management software sequences the picks to be completed in a single cycle of the unit. Multiples of the same SKU are picked, then delivered to a nearby workstation for sorting into their appropriate orders for shipping. Batching combined with AS/RS and pick to light technology can increase throughput by as much as 600 percent.

### **Speed Labor Productivity**

Adding more pickers to fill orders doesn't make financial sense. More workers can create more congestion in the aisles, slowing productivity instead of speeding it up. Implementing one (or more) horizontal carousel, vertical carousel or VLMs that operate on the good to person principle eliminates travel from one pick face to another.

To further increase productivity, these AS/RS technologies have integrated, light-directed picking systems that illuminate the item's location, eliminating search time at the pick face. These strategies increase productivity between 200 percent to 600 percent.

### **Increase Pick Accuracy**

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Picking mistakes are the bane of every warehouse manager. An estimated 35 percent of facilities experience ongoing pick error rates of 1 percent or more. Although 1 percent sounds like a slim margin for improvement, it adds up quickly. AS/RS features, such as light-directed indicators that pinpoint the precise SKU location and quantity to be picked, increase picking accuracy up to 99.9%. The system negates human error and yields better inventory contro

**Improve Space Utilization** Utilizing overhead space, AS/RS technologies can recover up to 85 percent of currently used floor space. Open space can be used to expand inventory or repurposed for other, revenue generating processes. Additional value-added services, such as light manufacturing for customization, kitting of related items, or enhanced quality control processes, can positively impact a company's bottom line.

### Manage Seasonal (or Peak) Demand

Most warehouses experience peaks and valleys in demand throughout the year or in the case of e-commerce throughout the day. The same AS/RS technologies can accommodate spikes in demand that routinely occur during a shift because of the integrated control and inventory management software interfaces with a facility's warehouse management system (WMS). The combined data yields information that balances order flow with worker availability and material handling systems.

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