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Warehouse-Ready, Small-Footprint Solutions

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As delivery windows, customer expectations and labor availability continue to challenge omnichannel fulfillment operations, organizations of all sizes are searching for solutions that relieve market pressures and have the flexibility to react to opportunities and disruptions.

A solution gaining popularity for small to midsized organizations is employing high-density storage and fulfillment in smaller footprints. This solution can help these organizations quickly automate with a proven warehouse-ready, small-footprint solution that maximizes space, reduces labor dependency and satisfies e-Commerce and customer demands.

In this FORTNA insight, we will discuss the benefits of a high-density storage solution in a smaller footprint and its flexibility, inventory control and cost savings.

High-density solutions, no matter the size

When you think of a high-density, automated solution, the image that might come to mind is a big box retailer with over a million SKUs, large, condensed storage and a fleet of robots feeding numerous goods-to-person (GTP) stations. However, some operations use the same high-density solution and equipment as larger operations but only fulfill 400 to 500 orders daily with only five robots and a few GTP stations.

The automation journey to a highly automated solution was traditionally done when increased orders, customer satisfaction and market pressures demanded it. This process can be drawn out and filled with obstacles and delays. With a warehouse-ready, small-footprint solution, an operation can go from a manual or minimally automated warehouse to a best-in-class operation, essentially skipping over incremental growth in automation.

By adopting these dependable and proven automated solutions, a small to midsized operation can reap the rewards of a larger warehouse while giving their business a critical competitive edge. Some of the benefits are:

1. Cost savings: Manual and time-consuming processes are greatly reduced as ordered items are now delivered to workers at GTP stations, lessening the need for labor. Cost savings are also realized in energy savings, shipping material costs and SKU loss and shrinkage.

2. Inventory control: With a high-density solution, inventory is tracked throughout the entire fulfillment process, from putaway to picking and shipping. Historically, order accuracy rates have been at 97%, leading to efficient and dependable operations.

3. Enhanced agility: Flexibility to respond to promotional, seasonal and market trends allow operations to react by scaling to increase order fulfillment time and volume.

4. Proximity to customers: Small to midsized organizations can concentrate on core and geographical customers, allowing them to satisfy demand and build loyalty with quick delivery times and minimal stockouts.

5. Sustainability: Significant energy consumption savings can be seen as indoor transportation such as fork trucks can be reduced, and the need to light and heat/cool expansive storage areas is no longer necessary or is significantly minimized.

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How AutoStore modularity lends itself to smaller-footprint warehouse operations

As one of the leading high-density solutions, AutoStore's unique modular design makes it an attractive solution for small and midsized operations. With its 5-module system, the AutoStore solution can meet and manage e-Commerce activities and effectively feed other distribution channels from one source. Take the following AutoStore benefits into consideration:

1. Modularity and integration speed: The AutoStore solution can be built to the operation's needs using available floor space, building around columns and other structures, and fitting almost any size or shape. This modularity of design allows for quicker integration and engineering cost savings.

2. Capacity savings: With inventory stored in a dense area, the space needed for storage is reduced, reclaiming an operation's capacity for future expansion or other needed warehouse functions.

3. Scalability: Some of the most appealing features of the AutoStore solution is the ease of growth, scaling of storage, performance and throughput, which is easily achieved by expanding the grid, adding robots and GTP stations, and allowing an operation the flexibility to scale as needed.

4. Reliability: With an average uptime of 99.7% and a simplified maintenance approach, the AutoStore solution can ensure consistent throughput and fulfillment.

5. Productivity and safety: By delivering SKUs to the GTP station, workers can now fulfill orders in one area and no longer walk through shelving stacks searching for ordered items. This new fulfillment process reduces the need for labor, increases productivity and makes the warehouse a much safer workplace.
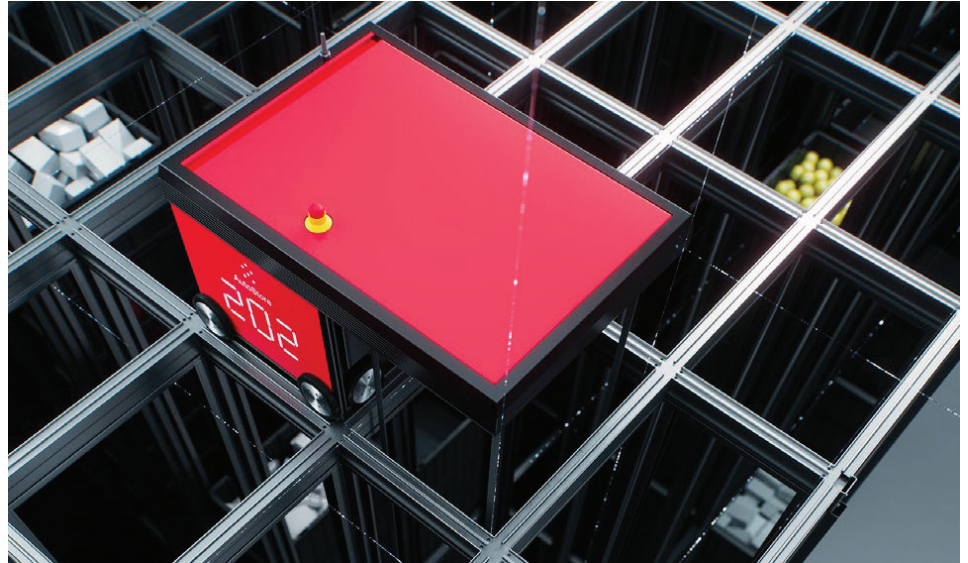
In-Store High-Density

Another trend in high-density storage and automation is placing a small-footprint solution behind a storefront. Offering a unique customer experience, these operations now have more products readily available for in-person shoppers, decreasing the inventory on the store floor, which opens it up for more impactful displays and interactions with staff. Many of these operations have incorporated their high-density solution into their customer experience, letting customers see it in action.

Not only impressing in-store customers with selection and inventory accuracy, but the operation can also fulfill online orders for customers and partners from one facility.

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Best-of-class automation for all operational sizes

The need to stay competitive is crucial, no matter the size of an organization. The advantages of improved inventory management, space utilization and labor efficiency can be just as impactful for small-footprint operations as for large operations. A warehouse-ready, small-footprint solution can minimize automation growing pains and move a small to midsized organization to a proven, modular and scalable automation solution.

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FORTNA CAN HELP

Warehouse-ready, small-footprint solutions can accelerate the automation journey for small to midsized operations. By leveraging FORTNA's industry expertise and integrating our intelligent software with a high-density solution, an organization can realize increased integration time and a quicker return on investment. As an AutoStore global partner, FORTNA can work with small to midsized organizations to meet business, operational and budget requirements while assisting with processes, integration and software.

Contact us today at **www.FORTNA.com**

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