

Automating Warehouse Operations: Where to Start and How to Maximize Gains



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Deploying automation and robotics in the logistics industry has gained in urgency in recent years. No longer just the prerogative of global corporations, automation is also key for small to mid-size companies grappling with ecommerce acceleration and seeking efficiencies in their supply chain operations.

Q What are some recent automation trends or solutions that address ecommerce acceleration?

A Some of the biggest trends we're seeing in the logistics industry relate to automation and robotics, and how to increase efficiency across all parts of the fulfillment and distribution process.

As an automatic sorting solution provider, we see firsthand how even small to mid-size companies are pivoting towards smarter ways to switch over their manual processes with smart tech.

Q For smaller companies seeking to automate warehouse operations, what solutions should they consider to immediately address pain points?

A A great place to start is to look at weighing and dimensioning solutions. Being able to scan and log products by SKU to keep volumetric weight low is critical as prices continue to rise.

For smaller companies, it is important to find scalable automation solutions to address long-term considerations. Avoid finding ones that are "just right" now, but not in the long term.

Q What are the long-term advantages of automation solutions in parcel processing operations?

A If you choose a solution wisely—one that is scalable with your company growth—you will reap the benefits long after your initial investment is paid off. It's essential to find solutions that are long-term and adaptable, and that you invest in continued maintenance along the way to ensure a healthy ROI.

Addressing pain points with modular solutions allows a company to keep its existing processes running and over time makes introducing new automation simple, intuitive, and efficient.

Q How has the labor shortage affected companies' approach to automating operations in warehouses and distribution centers?

A Many companies used to make decisions to invest in automation based on labor ROI, but now companies are looking at meeting and exceeding their service level agreements (SLAs).

A labor shortage makes it difficult to deliver goods on time and that affects your SLA and reputation to those you serve. Using automation boosts the labor force you do have, and maximizing productivity is paramount to meeting SLA standards.