



Pick & Pass system for online grocery shopping

HIGHER PERFORMANCE

The new 'Pick & Pass' system has minimized walking in the Peapod warehouse, thereby increasing pick performance and enabling further growth.

INSTALLATION DURING OPERATION

Because Peapod runs a two shift operation for 358 days per year, the installation of the system had to take place during operation. Inther successfully succeeded in delivering an up and running system within five months.

SYSTEM INTEGRATION

The new conveyor system had to connect to a shipping sorter that was already in place. Inther took care of both the hardware- and software integration of both systems.

Founded in 1989 by brothers Andrew and Thomas Parkinson, Peapod has grown to be one of America's leading Internet grocers. Peapod is a wholly owned subsidiary of international food provider Royal Ahold, and works in partnership with Ahold USA supermarket companies. With more than 8,000 products for shoppers to choose from, Peapod boasts not just the expected selection of grocery basics, but also farm-fresh produce; restaurant-quality meats and seafood; diverse prepared foods and party trays; deli meats and cheeses (sliced to order); Kosher, organic and specialty foods; a vast selection of produce; a variety of beer, wine and beverages (in select markets); pet supplies; videos; office and school supplies and private label products from supermarket partners Stop & Shop and Giant.

Facing increasing demand, Peapod decided to give their warehouse in Gaithersburg an upgrade. Inther was selected to design and deliver a 'Pick & Pass' system (Zone picking) with sorting to different routes.

Inther managed to have the system up and running within four months. Normally this would not be a remarkable achievement, considering that a lot of equipment like racking, RF-equipment and the complete shipping sorter could be re-used and implemented during regular operation. However, the installation had to take place during normal operation, putting the project team up to the test. Thanks to careful planning and mutual cooperation, Inther installed and commissioned the system according to plan.



Because the existing orderpick hardware and picking activities remained largely the same, Peapod was able to have their orderpickers up to speed almost instantly.

Project

The system is divided in three temperature zones, ambient, cool and chill. Frozen articles are picked in a freezer and are added to the (chill) system later on.

Orders are initiated by the WMS. Via an arm-mounted RF terminal an operator is instructed to scan an empty box. This is done decentrally, i.e. an order starts in the zone where it has its first pick. After scanning the box, the pick instructions (within the zone) are displayed on the RF terminal. After all picks in the zone have been completed the operator is instructed to put the box onto the conveyor system. If required, ice packs are added to the box and after the last pick has been performed, a lid is put on. The shipping sorter sorts all boxes to their correct destination (drop-off route).



Scott deGraeve, general manager at Peapod Gaithersburg:

“By installing the conveyors and a pop-up sorter, we were able to eliminated a notorious bottleneck in our DC operation and boost capacity by 50 percent.”

Inther LC

Inther delivered the complete ‘Pick & Pass’ conveyor system for Peapod and also took care of the integration with the existing shipping sorter. The MFC module of Inther LC (Logistics Control) was delivered to assure the correct material flow of boxes through the system. The Inther SCADA system gives a full status overview of the system and holds tools to analyze historical data. The SCADA system can be accessed via the supervisor PC or via a PDA.

Advantages

- Higher pick performance
- Enable future growth
- Re-use of existing equipment
- Short learning curve



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