

Distribution Center Solutions

DC Series – Printing Cart

The Challenge

Many large distribution centers process merchandise from their vendors in a traditional manner in which the distribution center completes 100% of the work required to convert the merchandise from bulk packaging to being store ready. This means that every unit is ticketed, sorted and repackaged from the vendor carton into individual cartons for the stores. This process typically results in 70-80 /hr units being processed within a large distribution center.

The Solution

Within the retail industry it has become a customary practice to develop relationships with vendors who perform many of the distribution center services such as applying the ticket and developing carton/case quantities that are then forwarded to the stores rather than being individually sorted at the distribution center. These partnerships require electronic data interchange (EDI) to transmit information from the vendor to the distribution center that informs the retailer of the merchandise that is part of every shipment down to the skew level. These types of shipments are typically called cross dock shipments within the industry

The Challenge

The challenge for retailers is then how to take this EDI information and make it easily integrate into their warehouse management database. Most accomplish this through labeling technology (ucc-128) that then requires the ability to use RF scanning technology to log the cartons on receipt at the distribution center into the database. A critical factor then becomes that of minimizing the time and handling of shipments that have incorporated all this technology.

The Solution

PowerCart provides a proven solution that allows efficient integration of these technologies by means of a mobile work platform that the equipment is mounted to and thus allows the distribution center employees to bring all the technology components to the shipments right at the shipping docks. These mobile workstations can provide more than ten hours of battery life to support both RFscanning equipment and mobile printers. At one major department store chain's 40,000 sq/ft distribution center the successful implementation of this technology on 12 carts increased the processing of units per hour from 70-80 to 500 units/hour. Although this type of implementation requires capital investment, it is obvious that the ROI is quickly realized when the units/hour see such a significant increase.

Customer Comments

"The truly great thing is the ability to manage the flexible movement of merchandise anywhere in the building through the PowerCart's ability to provide a long lasting power source that is necessary for this kind of program. While it requires significant investment and strong vendor partnerships, the benefits to the bottom line are enormous." Scott Santos of Beall's Department Stores.

