

# Case Study

## Symbion Consumer

Location: Australia

Industry: Pharmaceutical

Application: Distribution

Lightning Pick Solution: LP Picking Carts



### **Australian Vitamin Supplement Company Boosts Accuracy & Performance, Cuts Labor with Lightning Pick Pick Carts.**

#### **Company Profile**

Symbion Consumer, Australia's largest distributor of vitamin supplements, supplies more than 3,500 health food stores and pharmacies across the continent and in New Zealand. To cope with rising demand, the company opened and operated six separate warehouses in and around Brisbane. Although the six locations addressed physical storage needs, staffing and managing the separate facilities was expensive.

#### **The Challenge**

To cut costs, the company decided to consolidate under one roof. However, shortly after the move, "we began to struggle with a number of pick-related issues, particularly accuracy, performance, picking labor costs, breakages and damaged stock," recalled Matthew Maw, IT Manager. "Worse, we were experiencing delays in getting product to customers. While we had reduced our freight costs, we had increased labor costs."

"The system tells the pickers everything they need to know. They only have to read the instructions on the screen. These will tell them which bay to go to, which product to pick and where it goes [on the cart]. It's designed in such a way that every time you pick up a product and put it in the box you have to scan it. If you don't, it won't tell you what box it should go in."

Matthew Maw  
IT Manager  
Symbion Consumer Products



**LIGHTNING PICK**

## The Solution

To address these challenges, the company implemented a mobile pick cart solution with pick-to-light modules, additional handheld and forklift scanners, and mobile label printers from Lightning Pick, a Matthews Automation Solutions brand. Formerly called the IPTI RF Batch PicKart™, the system's software provides Symbion Consumer with real-time batch picking optimization capabilities.

Using efficient algorithms to group orders by common pick location, the pick cart control software reduces pick face visits by up to 70%. Further, because picking is light directed and real-time controlled, accuracy and efficiency have greatly improved over previous paper-based picking processes.

## Benefits

Management has been delighted with the results: "Within a week [of the system going live], we were meeting and exceeding our previous pick rates," said Maw. "The system tells the pickers everything they need to know. They only have to read the instructions on the screen. These will tell them which bay to go to, which product to pick and where it goes [on the cart]. It's designed in such a way that every time you pick up a product and put it in the box you have to scan it. If you don't, it won't tell you what box it should go in."

Previously, approximately one order in five went out without the correct stock. Now, the error rate has been reduced to one order in 50; and Maw is confident that with a little more tweaking he'll get that figure down to one order in 100.

Thanks to the new mobile pick cart system, the warehouse reduced the number of required pickers from 23 to nine within just three months. At the same time, accuracy increased more than 10-fold. "We've improved staff efficiency, significantly reduced stock write-offs, and reduced stock movements," concluded Maw.



**Improved Accuracy**



**Increased Productivity**



**Fast ROI**



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