



Case Study: iForce



3PL CASE STUDY

Overview & Challenge

Part of the Culina Group, iForce Limited is a third-party logistics company that specializes in e-commerce fulfilment and returns logistics. With 11 warehouse locations in the UK, iForce provides a wide range of multi-channel logistics solutions to a variety of well-known retailers and brands.

Faced with exploding customer volumes, increasing business complexity and the industry wide challenges of recruiting and training sufficient colleagues, especially during the peak trading period of October to December, iForce needed a flexible and scalable automation solution that would de-risk their ability to deliver for their clients.

The iForce team worked closely with Locus to design and deploy a warehouse execution platform using Locus's autonomous mobile robots (AMRs). Business intelligence was delivered through a rich suite of management and operational dashboards and actionable reporting tools. Cost-management was made significantly easier with Locus's innovative Robots-as-a-Service (RaaS) model (vs. a traditional CAPEX model), providing operational management flexibility, helping iForce manage monthly fluctuations in demand and labor availability.

Having Locus Robotics on site, is firmly enhancing our ability to hit SLA on a daily basis.

Adam Bialasiewicz
General Manager

Critical Factors for Implementing Automation at iForce



3PL achieved 1 million picks in just 10 weeks after implementing LocusBots



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Results

In just six weeks, the Locus solution was fully integrated into the existing iForce Corby warehouse infrastructure and operations workflow, without the need for significant physical and costly changes in the warehouse infrastructure. After the smooth roll out at the first site, iForce was then able to seamlessly transfer bots to the second site, Rugby, again implementing the solution and going live in just 6 weeks.

Colleague training was smooth and easy compared to training using their current technology and process. Plus, iForce operations colleagues love engaging with the bots, and the learnings have provided a catalyst for other wider business and process improvement initiatives.

“Previously we had to spend up to 15 hours with a picker, in order to train them effectively.” said Adam Bialasiewicz, General Manager at iForce Rugby. Robert Lesniewski, Operations Manager, added, “Within just a few hours, I can have new colleagues up to speed.” Colleagues have also reported higher levels of workplace satisfaction, reflected in a significant increase in picking rates.

Currently, iForce has 24 LocusBots deployed at the Rugby site and 24 bots at the Corby site, with plans for further site deployments in the pipeline. As iForce plans for the upcoming peak and holiday seasons, the flexible Locus solution will seamlessly scale as demand spikes, doubling the fleet across the two existing sites for a 3 month period. The flexibility of the Locus RaaS model enables iForce to simply add LocusBots as required. The new LocusBots can be quickly and easily added via remote 'plug-and-play', seamlessly increasing the fleet - and capacity - in minutes.

Results



Productivity Increase

- + Reduced training times
- + Fast implementation
- + Increased associate performance

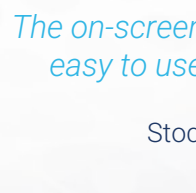
One dashboard shows where the concentrations of picks are in the warehouse and we use that to help deploy our colleagues more efficiently.

Stephen Harris
Automation Delivery Manager



There is a wide range of commercial benefits that we have already observed, mainly in training hours, because it's so much easier to manage the bot, compared to the RF scanner before.

Adam Bialasiewicz
General Manager



The on-screen instructions make it easy to use, and more accurate.

Lawrence Ferguson
Stock and Planning Manager

