Case Study: MyPillow

Overview & Challenge

The first MyPillow prototype product was developed in 2004 and their first infomercial aired in 2011, followed by an appearance by Mike Lindell in 2012. Today, MyPillow employs over 500 people, has sold over 70 million pillows, and sells a vast product variety including pillows, sheets, blankets, slippers, and even coffee .

Before 2022, MyPillow was strictly a hand-picking operation with a shipping interface that would house the orders until one person sorted out batches based on priorities, printed out the pick lists for those batches, and handed them to a picker. The picker would haul a cart around through the 50,000 square foot picking area to pick all of the different orders.

That manual process worked for MyPillow back when they had just two major categories of products with 100 SKUs. But they quickly eclipsed 3,000+ SKUs and knew their manual picking process wasn't going to be sustainable for much longer, so they needed to find a new solution.

David Grapentine, Senior Vice President of Operations, and Darren Lindell, Chief Operating Officer, looked at a few systems that could help with their biggest challenge of throughput, while doing more with less and being more efficient with the people they had.

"One system we looked at required that pickers follow the bot, which wasn't much better than using carts," said Grapentine.

Critical Factors for Implementing Automation at MyPillow

- Efficiency
- Labor
- Productivity
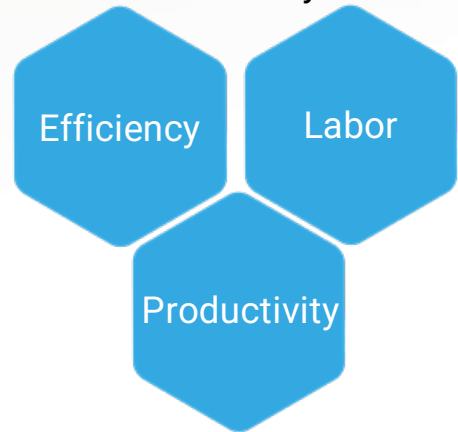
Retail company increases UPH by 87% with LocusBots
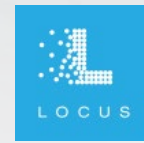
Results

During their search for a solution that didn't involve fixed infrastructure, Lindell heard about Locus Robotics. They watched two videos about the autonomous mobile robot (AMR) solution and quickly realized it was the exact solution they needed.

Locus Robotics worked with MyPillow to implement 33 AMRs at the Shakopee, MN facility near the end of 2022. The team quickly saw results in their operations and continued to feel confident about their decision.

"We're able to control more of what we want to get done for our daily goals," said Grapentine. "At the same time, the chaos factor has lessened compared to previous years for both picking and putaway, which is a much simpler process with the bots."

Before MyPillow started using the AMRs in their operations, they projected that they'd improve the units per hour (UPH) of 119 for their paper and pen processes to around 170 UPH. Instead, they've surpassed those numbers to 210 UPH, and their lines per hour (LPH) has improved to 150 LPH.

Along with UPH and LPH, order cycle time at MyPillow is now 50% quicker than it was before.

The company has always had good retention rates, but when they do train new associates, it's a 30-minute training session to learn basic picking instead of the half day that it would take with manual processes. Employees enjoy working with the bots so much that people will walk through from other areas of the facility and pick because it's fun.

Results

50% Improved order cycle time

87% Improvement in UPH

+ Improved Training Time

+ Improved Accuracy