

Subaru of New England Revs up Its Parts Distribution With Modula VLMs



CASE SUMMARY

Subaru of New England was moving into a new, larger facility and wanted to update its storage system to address problems of inefficiency, wasted floor space, and ergonomic risks to its workers. By installing nine Modula vertical lift modules, the distributor greatly enhanced throughput, ensuring orders are fulfilled promptly and accurately while reducing floor-space requirements and enhancing conditions for its workers.

THE ISSUE

Increasing throughput and accuracy while enhancing worker safety

Subaru of New England serves 64 Subaru dealers in the region, storing thousands of parts for the brand and shipping them to dealers as requested. The dealers order parts daily to be delivered the following morning. Executing this requirement was difficult due to an inefficient horizontal carousel system that not only consumed a great deal of floor space, but also presented safety risks to workers as they accessed parts by climbing ladders to reach high shelves. Picking accuracy suffered because workers had to search within the carousels to find the required parts and walk long distances to retrieve the items needed.

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Subaru of New England
Case Study

When the Subaru of New England built a new 165,000-square-foot facility to replace their previous 55,000-square-foot facility, they decided to overhaul their automated storage system.

THE SOLUTION

Installing 9 Modula vertical lift modules and accessories

Modula was selected to help devise a solution. Subaru of New England acquired nine vertical lift modules to help them store their parts in 11,000 unique, computer-tracked storage locations. In total, the VLMs provide 10,228 of cubic feet and 17,722 of square feet of storage – all on a footprint of a mere 958 square feet. This allows Subaru of New England to use more space for other purposes.

With three pods of three VLMs and a put-to-light batch order picking system, Subaru of New England can process up to 60 orders at a time. Their picking rates are in excess of 1,600 lines per day.

And because Modula VLMs are designed to bring the parts to the operators where they stand and at an ergonomically correct position, the risks to workers posed by the horizontal carousel systems have been eliminated.



"It's very important that we get the parts picked, packed and shipped to the dealers overnight. The Modula system helps us to do that. It helps us be efficient in our picking and it helps us make sure we meet the deadlines by the end of the day to get those orders shipped. It's an enclosed storage system, so what we like about that is that it's a clean environment, so we don't have to worry about the parts getting dirty. They can pick more parts in less time and in a safer manner." —Bill Kerkhoff, Warehouse Manager, Subaru of New England

KEY BENEFITS

- Over 17,000 square feet of storage on just 958 square feet of floor space
- Throughput increased to 1,600 lines per day
- Picking accuracy boosted and errors reduced
- Working environment enhanced
- Parts sent to dealers on time each day

TECHNICAL DETAILS

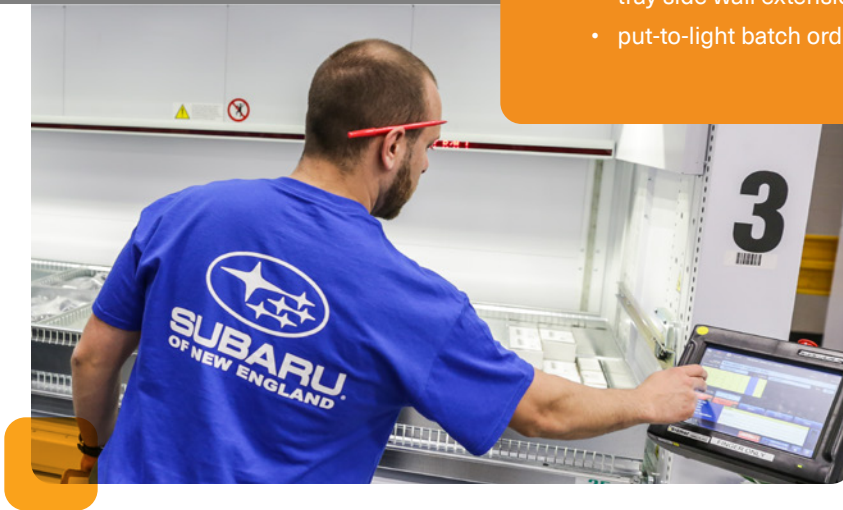
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|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Number of Units | Nine |
| Model | Modula MC25D-10,500/BI |
| Bay Type | Internal, dual-delivery |
| Tray Number | 85 per VLM |
| Tray Dimensions | 98.42" x 33.74" |
| Tray Capacity | 551 lbs per tray |
| VLM Height | 34' 6" |

SOFTWARE

- Modula WMS Standard
- Advanced Picking
- Advanced Inventory Management

OPTIONS INCLUDED

- alphanumeric LED bar
- automatic door
- tray side wall extensions, partitions, and dividers
- put-to-light batch order picking system



About the customer

Founded in 1971, Subaru of New England is located in Norwood, Massachusetts, and is the exclusive, independent distributor of Subaru parts to its 64-dealer network.

About Modula

Modula designs and produces automatic storage systems that dramatically boost productivity and accuracy, reduce storage spaces requirements, and enhance worker safety and job satisfaction. The only U.S. manufacturer of vertical lift modules, Modula also offers horizontal carousels, warehouse management systems, and a host of accessories that make order picking quick and easy. Established in 1987, Modula has nine branches worldwide, a network of 100 distributors, and factories in the United States, Italy, and China. More information can be found at modula.us.