

CASE STUDY

PARTS TOWN

Quadruple the Speed, Half the Space: How Parts Town and 4SIGHT Made It Happen with AutoStore

CHALLENGE

For the past 14 years, Parts Town has experienced exceptional growth. In 2015 they implemented the HighJump™ Warehouse Advantage warehouse management system (WMS) to replace older technology that could no longer support their fast-paced operation. HighJump's adaptable functionality allowed Parts Town to further deepen their customer and vendor relationships with critical innovations.

In the fall of 2016, Parts Town Director of Process Improvement Kenny William discovered AutoStore® via their partner Bastian Solutions. Seeing the advanced goods-to-person technology got his wheels turning. Not only did William see the potential for faster picking, but the compact nature of AutoStore would also maximize floorspace and provide a path for fast expansion as the company continued to grow.

"Seeing the AutoStore technology spurred discussion of moving to a new warehouse sooner than we'd planned," William said. "We basically signed the lease for the new building, got the keys, hung the lights, and built AutoStore." Although accustomed to configuring solutions internally, the daunting combination of moving warehouses while configuring AutoStore prompted William to seek outside expertise. "We were in over our heads and needed to review all our processes," he said, adding that Parts Town would have to operate out of two buildings for several weeks as inventory and equipment were transitioned from the old facility to the new one. And for AutoStore, there were also numerous software components that needed to communicate so orders could flow from the ERP to the HighJump WMS to the Exacta warehouse control system (WCS) to AutoStore.

OVERVIEW

Since 1987, Parts Town has been providing the foodservice industry with genuine OEM restaurant equipment parts. The Addison, Ill.-based company focuses on excellent customer service in the distribution of repair parts for items such as commercial beverage equipment, broilers, fryers, griddles, ice machines, and other essentials. The company celebrates safety, integrity, passion, courage, and innovation as its core values.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

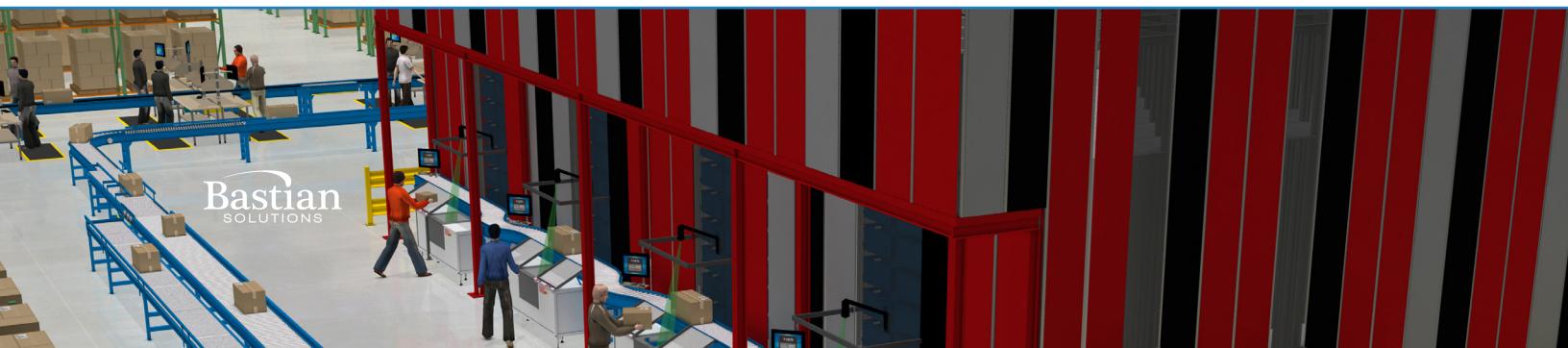
Create a seamless information flow across the multiple software solutions required to leverage the new AutoStore technology.

SOLUTION

4SIGHT built the necessary integration between the HighJump Warehouse Advantage WMS and Bastian Solutions' Exacta WCS, which connects to AutoStore.

RESULTS

- Quadrupled picking speed
- Maximized warehouse space utilization: 2 percent of floor space for 50 percent of picking
- Developed long-term partnerships to support growth and technology changes



SOLUTION

As a first step, William worked with Bastian Solutions to design and physically build their AutoStore solution, specifically tailored to Parts Town's growth needs. Bastian Solutions also provided the Exacta WCS to serve as the control system between the AutoStore internal software and HighJump Warehouse Advantage. To do the critical work of interfacing the HighJump WMS with the Exacta WCS, William called on 4SIGHT Supply Chain Group. He had first met with 4SIGHT at HighJump's annual Elevate conference in 2017, remembering an impactful presentation the 4SIGHT team had given. William brought the 4SIGHT team on board to partner with Parts Town, to collaboratively design the integration between HighJump Warehouse Advantage and the Exacta-AutoStore interface. Following the design phase, 4SIGHT did all of the expert HighJump WMS programming needed to make that interface a reality.

"4SIGHT's deep industry knowledge and impressive experience with the HighJump WMS enabled us to integrate seamlessly with Bastian Solutions' Exacta WCS, and in turn, AutoStore," William said. **"I'm particular about what we do and how we do it. The 4SIGHT team members have been mentors to me, teaching me about technical details and putting up with my exacting requirements. We're all perfectionists!"**



RESULTS

The powerful 4SIGHT-Bastian Solutions-HighJump-AutoStore combination has achieved impressive results for Parts Town. Today, Parts Town's AutoStore has 15,100 bins, 29 robots, and six ports—four for picking and two for put-away. William recently reported that the team completes over 50 percent of its picking from AutoStore. "We've been able to alleviate a lot of stress in our picking area," he said. "Employees really like it. It's easy to learn, and they can pick at blazing speed from day one."

Before the solution was in place, an associate could pick 300 lines per day. With AutoStore, associates can pick almost four times that rate. AutoStore takes up 2 percent of the warehouse's total floor space, and by bringing goods directly to the pickers, cuts down on over 100 miles per day of picker walking. William also likes that he can build onto the AutoStore grid while operations are running, with no downtime. "We designed our AutoStore for a 10-year planning horizon and can expand eight times if needed, up to 140,000 bins," he said.

William has been very pleased with the relationship Parts Town has developed with 4SIGHT and is proud of the AutoStore implementation project.

"The 4SIGHT team is truly our partner," William said. **"They move as quickly as we do, helping us implement breakthrough innovations as fast as we can think of them. We look forward to years of continued partnership with 4SIGHT to ensure our warehouse systems keep pace with rapid growth."**

