Focus On Distribution

BENCHMARK**BRIEFINGS**

kardexremstar

SITE
North American Bus Industries, Inc. (NABI)
Delaware, OH

APPLICATION
Distribution of bus parts to over 700 transit authorities

EQUIPMENT
Two Shuttle® Vertical Lift Modules

SUMMARY
North American Bus Industries, Inc. recovered 96% floor space while improving productivity by 2/3 and increasing overall warehouse capacity to 90%.

With two Shuttle VLMs, NABI improved productivity by 2/3 while recovering 96% previously occupied floor space allowing an internal expansion.

Shuttle VLMs Keeps the Fleet Running by using 96% Less Floor Space and Increasing Productivity by 2/3

Thanks to North American Bus Industries, Inc. (NABI) thousands of people throughout the United States get to work on time every day. Selling directly to bus transit authorities the network of NABI locations distribute parts to over 700 consumers. NABI guarantees parts will be shipped within twenty-four hours of order receipt, and in some cases same day shipment of critical items.

With a 60,000 sq. ft warehouse, the facility was able to improve productivity by 2/3 while saving 96% of the floor space once dedicated to their small parts inventory. “Our major problem was space, we needed more square footage. And our picking wasn’t very efficient either, it was a very time consuming process,” John Hankins, operations manager for NABI recalls.

In an effort to keep buses rolling and to meet their shipping requirements, NABI installed a Kardex Remstar Shuttle Vertical Lift Module (VLM). As a result, they have moved 30% of their small part inventory into the Shuttle VLM, providing the additional square footage they needed for more inventory. “By taking the space that was designated to small parts in the warehouse and moving them to the Shuttle VLM, we have increased our inventory by 10% and overall warehouse capacity by 90%,” said Hankins.

Making Room

Prior to purchasing the Shuttle VLM, NABI used shelving that stood six feet high and stretched out over 13 bays, taking up over 6,000 sq ft of the warehouse. Once implemented the Shuttle VLM was able to store the same amount of inventory in a 200 sq foot area providing NABI with a space savings of just over 96%. “The Shuttle VLM only takes up a 10 x 20 square foot area that took approximately 6,000 square foot of our warehouse before. The Shuttle VLM has saved us 5,800 square feet and we’ve used the recovered space for more warehouse shelving to increase our warehouse capacity,” Hankins says.

The Kardex Remstar Shuttle VLM stores just over $900,000 worth of parts, which is 75% of their small parts inventory, allowing NABI to store more bulky parts on the warehouse racking. As a result, NABI is now able to easily accept spares for all of the location’s new equipment. Should more space be required in the future, additional VLMs can quickly be added.

"We can pick 60% faster than the old system and there's no extra equipment involved," says Hankins.

Productivity & Accuracy

With the implementation of the Shuttle VLM, NABI has renewed and reorganized the way that parts are picked and shipped by not only saving floor space but also improving their productivity and worker ergonomics. The previous daily process consisted of employees taking their pick ticket, finding a scissor lift, walking to the location and pulling the part needed. In some cases, employees had to search for a scissor lift to retrieve the high positioned SKUs and had to bend down to pick from the bottom shelf, making for inefficient and time consuming picking.

Now when an order is entered through NABI's sales department, employees take a pick ticket which has the part number and quantity needed and the Shuttle VLM tray location. The item is automatically delivered to the operator at an ergonomic height, when they have all the parts they need the order is brought to shipping. "We can pick 60% faster than the old system and there's no extra equipment involved. The employee comes to the Shuttle VLM, types in the location, the parts are retrieved and he is on his way," describes Hankins.

By eliminating the time spent walking and searching for parts, NABI not only increased productivity, but improved accuracy too. "Our accuracy levels were definitely increased due to the organization of the parts in the Shuttle VLM, within the trays. There's less potential to retrieve the wrong part from the wrong location within the warehouse," according to Hankins.

Worker Ergonomics at its Best

Increased productivity for NABI means more parts out the door and in this case better ergonomics for their workers. Employees were not only walking and searching for parts, they were bending, reaching and stretching to pick inventory, creating a high risk of injury. The Shuttle VLM, delivering parts to the operator at an ergonomically correct height with just a push of a button, reducing the risk of injury and creating a safer work environment for NABI employees.

Not only is the Shuttle VLM ergonomically efficient, it has made it easy for new users to easily learn how to manage "Training is a quick process, within a half an hour a new employee has a good handle on how to use the equipment. So this has made it so much easier for the employee, and all the parts are at waist level," said Hankins.

With the continuing expansion of the NABI parts distribution, they will soon be moving into a new warehouse. "The Shuttle VLM gives us a lot of flexibility allowing us to add additional units for more storage capacity and incorporate software for future increases in productivity," concludes Hankins.

The Shuttle VLM, delivers parts to the operator at an ergonomically correct height with just a push of a button creating a safe work environment.

Kardex Remstar, LLC
41 Eisenhower Drive, Westbrook, ME 04092
800-639-5805 www.KardexRemstar.com info@kardexremstar.com