Buyers Products boosts productivity and service with Manhattan SCALE

MANUAL, PAPER-BASED SYSTEM RESTRAINED GROWTH WITH INEFFICIENT, LABOR-INTENSIVE PROCESSES

Established in 1946 as a distributor of truck and trailer components, Buyers Products Company has grown to become a leading manufacturer of products for the mobile equipment industry. Today, Buyers' vertically integrated manufacturing capabilities include forging, stamping, laser cutting, CNC machining, robotic welding, powder coating, assembly and retail-oriented packaging.

Buyers is committed to listening to its customers and to improving profitability and productivity, while enhancing the quality of its products and services. And, with more than 250,000 square feet of manufacturing facilities, Buyers is able to produce what its customers need.

To address the company's tremendous growth, Buyers moved into a new 150,000 square foot distribution center, nearly doubling its capacity. As part of the company's move into this expanded space, Buyers' goal was to implement an automated warehouse management system. The company had previously used manual, paper-based processes, so all data had to be keypunched, resulting in a labor-intensive, inefficient process.

Buyers needed to significantly increase efficiency to better manage its growing inventory and flow of product through a significantly larger distribution center. In addition, Buyers' customers were increasingly requesting more services and documentation, including EDI capability, compliance labeling and advance ship notices (ASNs).

BUYERS PRODUCTS CHOOSES MANHATTAN FOR FUNCTIONALITY AND .NET PLATFORM

After evaluating a number of different warehouse management systems, Buyers chose Manhattan SCALE based on its functionality and .NET-based platform. According to Pamela Davey, IT manager for Buyers Products,

Headquarters: Pittsburgh, PA

Distribution centers: 1

Manhattan solutions:
Manhattan SCALE™:
Supply Chain Architected for
Logistics Execution

RF equipment: Symbol Technologies

Challenge:
Inefficient, labor-intensive processes and tremendous growth challenged Buyers Products' supply chain operations.

Goal:
Automate processes to manage inventory better and provide more documentation and services to customers.

Solution:
Buyers Products uses Manhattan SCALE for all warehouse and outbound functions.

Result:
Order processing increases 70%-80%; productivity rises, customer service improves.

"The Manhattan Associates solution fit the way the industry was moving and was in line with what we needed to achieve our goals."

BUYERS PRODUCTS IMPLEMENTS SCALE AND ERP SYSTEMS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH MANHATTAN ASSISTANCE

Buyers implemented the solution in its new distribution center, along with a new ERP system. According to Davey, "Manhattan Associates put together a great team to help us in our implementation process—I don't know how we would have done it without them." Buyers also worked with True Fit Systems to develop the ERP interface.

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"Since implementing the Manhattan solution, our processing speed has increased dramatically. We can now process 140-170 LTL/TL orders per day—70-80% higher than four years ago. Our small package orders have increased to 1,000 per day—nearly double what we did before implementing the solution."

Pamela Davey, IT Manager
Buyers Products

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The ERP system feeds orders every eight minutes to Warehouse Management. Orders are waved every two hours throughout the day. A conveyor system carries orders to the picking area, where they go to one of two packing areas—small orders for parcel carrier or large orders for less-than-truckload (LTL) or truckload (TL) shipping.

Buyers uses Manhattan SCALE for all warehouse functions—receiving, putaway and replenishment—as well as for all outbound functions including picking, packing, creating shipping documentation, and cycle counting. In the evening, the system uploads all completed orders to ERP for invoicing.

"We had a big learning curve implementing two new systems at one time, but when push came to shove, Manhattan stood by us and got us back on our feet," stated Davey.

ORDER PROCESSING INCREASES 70%-80%; PRODUCTIVITY RISES

Since implementing the solution, Buyers' processing speed has increased dramatically. "We can now process 140-170 LTL/TL orders per day—70%-80% higher than four years ago. Our small package orders have increased to 1,000 per day—nearly double what we did before implementing the solution," stated Davey.

Buyers Products also significantly increased productivity. While the company has grown by approximately 50% over the past four years, labor resources have only increased by 20-25%. Davey added, "We still continue to improve productivity on an ongoing basis, which has enabled us to add new product lines."

The company simultaneously increased customer service capability. According to Davey, "Having come from a manual system, keeping track of inventory is critical. System-generated replenishment keeps the flow of product moving efficiently and accurately. We're now able to track orders through the Manhattan solution, so when a customer calls, we can tell them exactly where their order is in the picking, packing or shipping process."

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