



Keeping Kwik Trip’s bakery distribution “kwik” and fresh

How Cimcorp helped Kwik Trip automate order fulfillment in its new baking facility with a rapid, scalable solution designed to meet rising demand and guarantee freshness for its bakery products sold at over 700 locations daily

THE CHALLENGE

In order to meet the growing demand for its bakery products and stock its stores throughout the Midwest, Kwik Trip made plans in 2017 to open a brand-new, 200,000-square-foot baking facility in La Crosse, Wisconsin, which would be dedicated to producing bread and buns across three simultaneous lines.

THE NEW FACILITY would need to come online and get up to speed in concert with the repurposing of the previous one—and ultimately produce and distribute four times

the volume of output. To meet these requirements, the logical choice was to automate as much as possible and design a state-of-the-art facility where advanced systems would handle the majority of production, packaging, warehousing, and outbound distribution in a well-orchestrated, integrated fashion.

THE SOLUTION

Opened in the fall of 2018, the La Crosse baking facility produces and distributes 19 types of bread and buns. On the production side, Kwik Trip has been able to automate

everything from raw ingredient mixing down to the sprinkling of seeds on buns. Managing these automated operations are Kwik Trip’s plant operators, who have full visibility and control over the processes via touchscreen monitors.

FROM PRODUCTION, finished products are then sent to the packaging department, where different automated systems take care of bread slicing, bagging and bag tying. Once these goods are packaged, they enter one of the most critical points in the end-to-end process—the warehouse.



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR BAKERY SOLUTION VIDEO

53k
TRAYS PER 20 HOURS

zero
ERGONOMIC RISKS

100%
ORDER ACCURACY

QR CODE TO READ THE PRESS RELEASE



CIMCORP

Passion for optimized material flow

Founded in 1965, Kwik Trip is a family owned and operated chain of convenient stores with over 700 locations throughout Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Kwik Trip produces and delivers 25-30 different types of fresh baked goods to stores each day.



THE LA CROSSE BAKING FACILITY

includes an 87,000-square-foot warehouse that covers more than one-third of the building’s footprint. When choosing a system to automate product storage and retrieval within the warehouse, Kwik Trip turned to Cimcorp, having heard of its experience and expertise in automating order fulfillment within the bakery industry.

— Cimcorp’s automation is central to enabling this efficient product movement and is therefore pivotal to our bakery business. Cimcorp worked closely with us to develop an ideal solution that would make optimal use of our warehouse space and meet our present and future business needs.

Eric Fonstad
Facility Director, Kwik Trip

WORKING CLOSELY with Kwik Trip, Cimcorp designed an ideal layout and custom automated solution based on the facility’s expected throughput and business needs. Namely, Cimcorp determined high-density storage would enable the optimal use of storage space for Kwik Trip’s fast-moving inventory with bagged products stored in around 80,000 plastic trays stacked up to 20 high across the warehouse floor.

ORDER PICKING is managed by Cimcorp’s MultiPick system that features six overhead gantry robots inside three cells that can rapidly receive products in trays, place them onto a stack and assemble the required product quantities per order. Kwik Trip also uses a “pick-by-light” system for picking less-than-full trays in outbound orders.

CIMCORP’S WAREHOUSE CONTROL SOFTWARE (WCS)

controls and directs the MultiPick to pick the orders based on store and route. Such computer control helps Kwik Trip ensure that orders are picked with 100-percent accuracy before being sent for dispatch.

BENEFITS & RESULTS

Speed of delivery

The automated warehousing solution allows Kwik Trip to effectively manage all 80,000 trays and keep up with the fast-paced nature of its growing bakery business, where inventory is held no more than 48 hours before being sent to all stores.

Futureproofing

Cimcorp developed Kwik Trip’s system to meet the company’s five-year growth plan, with the ability to receive all daily production from both the bread and bun lines, as well as process orders for 53,000 outbound trays in 20 hours. Since the MultiPick is a modular system, Kwik Trip can scale its levels of automation based on production output and consumer demand.

Employee safety

Whereas Kwik Trip’s previous facilities required manual picking, automated handling has eliminated that need—and the ergonomic risks for warehouse workers that come with it. For additional safety measures, the picking area is completely fenced off with built-in safeguards.

Additional benefits

Cimcorp’s WCS ensures a true first-in-first-out (FIFO) model, and complete product traceability. Moreover, the system allows Kwik Trip to manage a surge capacity that manual picking couldn’t.

ULTIMATELY, Kwik Trip has enhanced productivity and efficiency with fully integrated automation between its manufacturing, packaging, warehousing and distribution processes. This has presented not only an operational benefit, but also a customer satisfaction one, where stores are well-stocked each day with only the best and freshest bakery products that the company has to offer.



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