

Hit your stride

How our scalable and efficient WMS and AMR solutions helped Fleet Feet automate their growing business.



Snapshot

Company	Fleet Feet
Industry	Retail
Warehouse Size	75,000 Sq. Ft.
Körber Competency	Supply Chain Software
Solution(s)	K.Motion Warehouse Edge Autonomous Mobile Robots

Complexity

Conquer the difficulties caused by outdated warehouse practices and the complexity of a multichannel growing business.

Best practice

Advance a growing business using digitization and automation.

Into the future

Fleet Feet is a women-founded company that serves as running hubs for their respective communities selling running shoes, socks and accessories. Today they have over 270 locations, a mix of both company-owned and franchise stores. The company prides itself on its level of customer service, attention to detail and one-on-one service.

Fleet Feet was growing at an exponential rate. Just five years ago the company was operating out of one 7,500 square foot distribution center (DC). Due to growth they moved to a 25,000 square foot DC in North Carolina. They quickly outgrew that space and opened a second distribution center nearby. Subsequently a third facility in Colorado was gained through an acquisition.

As the company continued to expand, they decided to combine the two North Carolina distribution centers. Throughout the growth, the team realized the Warehouse Management System (WMS) was struggling to keep up. Simultaneously their finance team made the decision to switch to a NetSuite, ERP system. Since Fleet Feet's original WMS solution was not compatible with NetSuite, they needed to implement a new solution.

Getting on the right track

The company needed a much more robust system for their operation. One that could not only meet the immediate needs pertaining to growth but, set them up

112%

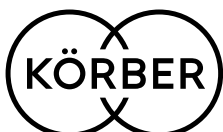
increase in units picked per hour

2x

weekly order fulfillments

Order fill rate increased to

over 98%



to grow for years to come. A main element they were searching for was the ability to split orders between multiple facilities. With their previous WMS, IT had to custom create the ability to split orders, leaving room for errors. In addition, they wanted a capable cycle counting function and good reporting. They were also managing several different channels, Amazon, FleetFeet.com, franchise and company owned storefront locations out of the distribution center.

Fleet Feet took a very hands-on approach during the process of selecting a WMS. “Their willingness to be a part of the process, have open conversations, participate in discovery, analysis, and idea creation – fueled a successful process to get the most out of the partnerships they were creating for the project,” said Philip Garrison, Sales Account Executive at Körber.

Partners in this together

Through the guidance of Myers Holum, a NetSuite Alliance Partner, Fleet Feet reviewed a handful of WMS providers that best fit their operations and could integrate with NetSuite. Thorough conversations were had, and Körber’s K. Motion Warehouse Edge (WMS) enabled by SaaS, was selected as the best partner for Fleet Feet.

Prior to the selection of Körber and NetSuite, Fleet Feet had started conversations on the use of Autonomous Mobile Robots (AMR) within eCommerce fulfillment. At the time, however, it was difficult to figure out how to efficiently use robotics with large orders, up to 3,000 units. “One of the cool things about Körber is it allowed us to break the orders up into smaller pieces. You still have this whole large order, but we could break it up into smaller parts,” said Anthony Pendola, Senior Manager of Distribution at Fleet Feet. This allowed Körber to bring in robotics partner, Locus Robotics. Together, they found a solution to break down the orders into smaller pieces.

Hitting their stride

WMS was implemented from end to end of the operation in the distribution center. Twenty-two Locus Origin Autonomous Mobile Robots were setup in outbound.

After scanning an order, the robot moves through the warehouse, taking the fastest path to the closest picking location – all without operator intervention. Here, a picker uses information from the robot’s screen, to find and pick the item required. The picker then scans and drops the item into the appropriate tote, leaving the robot to continue to the next pick location.

To address the bulkier boxes of shoes, Fleet Feet worked with their shipping material supplier and Locus Robotics to create a custom-made box that fits on the bot. Taking it one step further, the custom box pickers are putting orders into, is the box it will ship out in. This created a much more efficient process. Items, such as socks, accessories and nutrition products use 40-gallon tubs provided by Locus.

While at first Fleet Feet’s distribution center associates were apprehensive to the change, they came to be very happy with the automation. Following go-live they began to train the team. At week four they noticed the team began to hit their stride, realizing the full capabilities of the automation. They saw a decrease in training time and easier onboarding for new associates.

With Körber’s tight integration with NetSuite, as well as the strong partnership with Locus and Myers Holum, they were able to leverage all subject matter expertise. This combined with Fleet Feet’s willingness to have open conversations and invest in the discovery process allowed the ideal result.

Fleet Feet realized several key benefits.

- 112 percent increase in units picked per hour
- Increased inventory accuracy to over 97.5 percent
- Order fill rate increased to over 98 percent
- Increased lines picked per hours while decreasing pickers by 50%
- Doubled weekly order fulfillment
- Decreased training time – prior to WMS and AMR training took 2 to 3 days, now its done in 15 to 30 minutes

Looking ahead

Fleet Feet intends to keep scaling the business, adding stores and DCs across the country. The company is looking forward to continuing to foster the new partner relationships made in thanks to this project.

“What was really important to us is, if we make this jump to a SMB WMS, are we going to be able to stay on it for 8 – 10 years. We found that with Körber.”

Anthony Pendola
Senior Manager of Distribution
Fleet Feet

