

## Automation for Auto Parts Supplier

### Traffic Jam

An automotive parts supplier for the retail market had a product labeling challenge. Their manual and labor-intensive carton-labeling scheme was proving to be inadequate for their facility's increasing volume. They recognized the need for some automation of the process; however, they did not want to relinquish the simplicity of their manual system. Their manual system consisted of pre-printing carton labels in their office area and hand applying the labels to palletized loads of cartons. Also, because the labels applied were for retail display; the importance of placement accuracy and product face orientation on the shippable pallet were paramount. This often resulted in chaotic activity by multiple workers in and around a pallet of product to perform these operations.



### Entrance Ramp Sighted

The solution was to manually de-palletize a given load of cartons and

place them on a conveyor that would convey cartons individually past an automatic label print and apply unit.

Once labeled, the cartons would then be conveyed to manual re-palletizing stations equipped with ergonomic pallet lifting and lowering equipment to assist operators. The automatic print and apply would provide consistency in label placement accuracy and improve the facility's throughput. The conveyor delivery after labeling and ergonomic pallet building stations would increase the efficiency of the re-palletizing process compared to the previous chaotic scene.



The challenge for **Insight Automation** was to provide the *conveyor controls* and *PC based interface* to the *label print and apply unit* that would allow easy selection tools for operators to swiftly select the correct label for the cartons being processed as well as integrate the Customer's pallet data to display pallet pattern and configuration information.

## Cruise Control

Control engineers applied Insight Automation's *ConveyNet® modular control hardware* for the conveyor controls in order to provide an easy installation as well as an easy migration path for future expansion.

Insight software engineers developed an *intuitive operator interface* that integrated the print and apply unit's native drivers with the Customer's requirements for simple product selection and operator instruction as to which label stock to use and how many items were to be printed.



The PC application also integrated a *remote monitor screen* to display to the palletizing operators as to the stacking pattern and carton orientation for the given run of cartons.

The system was off and running and the Customer is considering expanding the current configuration to include automatic palletizing equipment in the near future.

*For more information contact Tim Barnes at Insight Automation Inc.  
(800)-764-6356  
[www.insightautomation.cc](http://www.insightautomation.cc)*