CASE STUDY: ASHLEY FURNITURE

Furniture manufacturer and retailer increased productivity and expanded globally with the HighJump Supply Chain Advantage Suite

Quick Facts: Ashley Furniture

Distribution Centers: Six

Total DC Size:
Each average more than one million square feet

Retail Stores:
450+ company-owned and licensee stores, plus 25,000+ wholesale customers

Solution:
HighJump™ Warehouse Management System (WMS), Yard Management Solution (YMS), and Labor Management Solution (LMS)

COMPANY PROFILE – ASHLEY FURNITURE

Ashley Furniture is a home furniture manufacturer and retailer based in Arcadia, Wis. It is the largest home furniture manufacturing company in the world and the second-largest retailer. Ashley HomeStores are a mix of company-owned stores and licensee stores that are independently owned and operated throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Central America, and Asia, with additional locations added daily. Ashley Furniture employs more than 25,000 people worldwide.

In addition to its Wisconsin headquarters, Ashley operates manufacturing facilities in Mississippi, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and California, as well as international facilities in China and Vietnam.

CHALLENGE

Ashley opened its first HomeStore in 1997 and within 10 years it had become the top furniture retailer in the U.S. This explosive growth brought supply chain challenges, including improving inventory accuracy, adding RF-directed workflow, and managing inter/intra building replenishment efficiencies.

Because of the fast-changing nature of the furniture industry and Ashley's commitment to continuous process improvement, the company needed a supply chain software

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solution that could adapt to its evolving business needs. Furthermore, the company's demanding 24/7 parameters for service-call response necessitated a solution that could be supported and improved with its own in-house team.
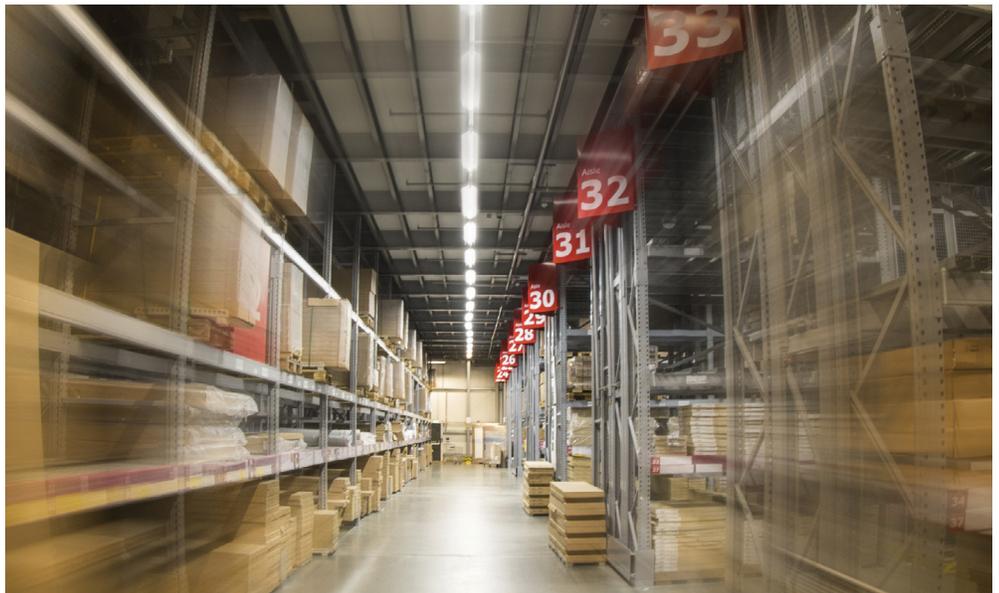
SOLUTION

Ashley Furniture chose the HighJump™ supply chain solution suite because of its open architecture and flexibility. The Ashley team was able to take complete ownership of the solution after implementation, including software management and upgrades.

Ashley first implemented the HighJump warehouse management system (WMS) and yard management system (YMS) at its headquarters' distribution center (DC). The solution was then rolled out to four additional domestic DCs and a Chinese DC. Later, Ashley enabled the HighJump Labor Management (LMS) tools across all sites.

The WMS gives Ashley a foundation of best practices for receiving, put-away/flow-through, inventory management, order processing, replenishment, and more, along with the ability for the company to build its own specific processes. The YMS provides Ashley with clear visibility of the number and location of its trucks and inventory, which may be located off-site or in huge yards that are tens of acres in size. Yard drivers receive prioritized tasks on their mobile devices, which are based on the urgency of the job to be completed and the driver's location within the yard. The LMS gives Ashley the ability to measure and track labor activities to further increase efficiencies, as well as objectively measure employee performance against engineered expectations.

"The flexibility of the HighJump solutions is what appealed most to us," explained Jon Kuerschner, Ashley Furniture Vice President of Supply Chain Systems. "Our team is able to efficiently manage the software, as well as make changes and upgrades as market conditions dictate. We control our own destiny and have embraced continuous process improvement execution through the HighJump technologies."

RESULTS

Due to its rapid growth, Ashley Furniture required sophisticated, flexible supply chain software to support and foster its business changes. The company has enjoyed gains in efficiency, as well as the ability to be more productive without needing to increase headcount.

"We have significantly decreased our operating expenses related to distribution since implementing HighJump."

— **Jon Kuerschner**
Vice President of Supply Chain Systems, Ashley Furniture

"We have significantly decreased our operating expenses related to distribution since implementing HighJump," said Kuerschner. "We've also been able to centralize the efforts of many departments around one common technology, which has led to more gains in efficiency."

For example, improved overall inventory visibility has allowed Ashley to more accurately plan outbound activity. When a truck needs to be filled, Ashley knows how much inventory is in stock at the warehouse, how much is off-site, how much is in the yard, how much is in transit, and how much is currently in production. The system can look at these variables and create the required inventory decisions and associated moves (i.e., planned yard moves, off-site replenishments, planned cross-docks, pick waves, etc. to ensure the available product will be coordinated to meet the needs of an outbound truck. In sum, the HighJump supply chain suite allows the company to implement very specific timing and synchronization among many moving parts.

"We have more than 1,000 users of HighJump solutions and plan on adding more, so the scalability of the solutions has and will be very important to us," said Kuerschner. "We've also provided HighJump with a lot of feedback throughout the process. They have listened and made changes to the software. This has been a positive relationship for us."

FUTURE PLANS

Ashley Furniture continues to implement HighJump Software solutions throughout its facilities domestically and abroad.

ABOUT HIGHJUMP

In almost every industry, buyers are becoming more fickle, and more demanding. For logistics executives, effectively meeting buyer needs has become a relentless quest for speed and agility. Traditional supply chain solutions – siloed, complex and hard-to-implement – no longer suffice, as competitors find ways to deliver goods faster and more profitably.

In this "now" economy, HighJump helps you stay agile, with adaptable, connected solutions that harness the power of your trading partner community. From the warehouse to the storefront, from the desktop to the driver's cab, we can help you achieve new levels of supply chain responsiveness, performance and profitability.

HighJump's suite of warehouse management, business integration, transportation management, and retail/DSD solutions form a complete, powerful and adaptable platform that allow you to drive growth, customer satisfaction and revenue. **HighJump: supply chain accelerated.**

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THE HIGHJUMP TEAM IS HERE TO HELP!

If you have any questions regarding HighJump or how our products can improve your business, our passionate team is here for you.

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