

Faster fulfilment

As logistics continues to embrace robotics, solutions-provider Dematic has introduced a new robotic picking module to improve accuracy and productivity. Pas Tomasiello, Senior Director of Integrated Systems for Dematic Australia and New Zealand presents the solution.

Robotics have been part of the supply chain for a while now, already widely used to store, retrieve and transport cartons and pallets, but what is newer to the industry is piece picking robotics.

Advances in technology and rising operational costs have led to businesses looking at the option of robotic piece picking as a way to improve efficiency in the warehouse and keep up with the rising demand of e-commerce.

The effect of e-commerce on supply chain

The growth of e-commerce is changing distribution centres (DCs) and having a profound effect on customer expectations, with an increase in customer demand and more small or single product orders. Warehouses now hold more SKUs than ever, in a wide variety of shapes, size and weight, meaning that robotics need to be more flexible than in the past and able to handle these items without slowing down operations.

Dematic has introduced its Robotic Piece Picking Module, which is designed to improve accuracy and productivity during the last touch of the fulfilment process — the point



Robotics play a huge role in keeping up with the rising demand of e-commerce.

where items of varying sizes and shapes are processed by hand.

Traditionally, the last touch has been a manual process, due to robotics previously not being able to pick smaller or single product orders, but the Robotic Piece Picking Module completes the automation of the fulfilment

chain. The module selects, grips, lifts and places individual items of varying sizes into containers or bins to complete a shipment. It delivers pick rates of 600–1,200 items per hour ensuring on time delivery of a wide variety of SKUs, such as personal care items, cosmetics, packaged food, office supplies and a variety of other package types, shapes and fragility.

Piece picking robotics helps overcome industry challenges

DCs are facing increased pressure to find reliable, qualified and available labour. Piece picking is labour-intensive, repetitive work and often places workers in uncomfortable environments, so the supply chain can face real challenges when it comes to finding enough long-term staff to keep up with order demands.

Robotics offerings, such as Dematic's Robotic Piece Picking Module, help warehouse managers streamline processes through advanced technology and software that operate 24/7 with extraordinary accuracy, drilling down labour costs and improving fulfilment efficiency. The key to success is in identifying the system solution that meets the



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The Dematic Robotic Piece Picking Module is part of a suite of automated solutions.

unique needs of a customer's application.

The Dematic Robotic Piece Picking Module is part of a suite of automated solutions built around process improvements, robotic technology, vision and software within the Dematic Robotics Centre of Excellence.

Robotic piece picking technology is evolving

at a rapid pace, and beyond reviewing the technical aspects of the various components, you also need to consider the flexibility, scalability, and modularity of a completely integrated system that is right for your facility.

By investing in the development of feature-rich modules using advanced technologies,

businesses can overcome the toughest logistics challenges. Piece picking robotics increase efficiency and accuracy within the warehouse and will help supply chain businesses be better positioned when it comes to implementing robotic advances in the future. **LMH**

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