

The Future of Inventory Management and the Key to Effective Storage

How will the warehouse of the future (say, 10 years) look different from today?

We're in an era where there is a lot of automation—so in 10 years we may even be completely automated! There are a group of fully motorized products that are keeping up with this trend. Motorized parts carousels take advantage of vertical space, capturing what was once wasted space and turning it into valuable storage. Because of one-person operation and motorized retrieval, they bring parts to the picker, thereby increasing productivity and improving worker safety. With this comes increased space efficiency; a motorized parts carousel's small footprint maximizes floor space by fully utilizing vertical space.

Machines are also becoming equipped with built-in test equipment to become self-diagnostic for problems, eliminating potential downtime experienced with a faulty machine.

In the immediate future, what new methods, practices or products do you see in the next one or two years?

Again more automation. Even in warehouses today picking, replenishment, and inventory control can be completely automated and run by a touch-screen console backed by a PC. This allows easy access to all operational functions at any time.

Such is the case with the Vidmar® Vertical Lift Module. This high-density vertical storage tower tracks varied stock, so workers can efficiently locate inventory using programmable software to search for it. A unique elevator system then retrieves the rack where the part is stored and delivers it to a picking bay. To load the machine, the operator takes a piece of inventory, measures and weighs it, and enters it into the computer before placing it in one of the racks. An efficient system of bar-coding, scanning, and logging in material makes for the most effective form of inventory control.



The Vidmar Tower automated storage and retrieval system (AS/RS) is the ultimate high-density vertical storage solution, helping you get the most performance out of every inch of your manufacturing floor space.



What is the biggest source of inefficiency in most warehouses?

Space utilization and inventory control—knowing where the product is and how to get to it quickly. When you're not using your warehouse square footage to your advantage it can easily lead to problems. Suddenly you can't find what you're looking for, inventory management becomes slow, and you can feel the pinch in your bottom line.

How do you rectify it?

Organization—it's the key to any well-run warehouse, and to be organized you need the power of an efficient storage system on your side. Store the product properly, know where it is, and pick and replenish it quickly.

Increase organization by increasing storage space. Spatial issues in warehouses have necessitated building up rather than building out, and this concept is echoed in space-saving storage. The easiest way to do this is with modular storage cabinets that take advantage of vertical space and are tailored to your needs. As those needs expand, so do these adaptable storage systems. Building-block-like flexibility allows for the addition of one or more cabinets to accommodate a growing inventory, and you can reconfigure them as much and as often as needed.

In addition to their organizational capacities, modular storage cabinets actively protect your parts, tools, and other equipment by eliminating the wear and tear of open shelving. Fully extendable drawers that keep contents at eye level make finding parts simple and protect them from dust and unnecessary handling when closed, doubling shelf life. Two modular storage cabinets can store the entire contents of five conventional shelving units, so imagine the fiscal possibilities as you continue to grow your inventory and maximize the use of space at your facility.

What does a warehouse gain from increased efficiency?

Increased efficiency has a domino effect of benefits: The warehouse employees will be able to pick and replenish more quickly, ship more product, and be more profitable!

Vidmar offers storage solutions to all industries, with modular space-saving systems that provide quick, safe access to parts, tools, and supplies. A Vidmar system can maximize valuable floor space while providing an integrated solution for inventory control. Customers can arrange for a free analysis of their storage needs by calling **800-523-9462**. Detailed information on Vidmar products is available at **STANLEYVidmar.com**.