

“We have enjoyed extremely positive outcomes to date both in terms of operational efficiency and productivity. Manhattan SCALE has empowered us to improve workflow and labour management and we are excited to see how much further it can take us in the future.”

Frank Fuller, National Operations Manager, Fashion Biz



FASHION BIZ

DCs & Locations: 65,000 sq ft – Sydney;
110,000 sq ft – Melbourne

Manhattan solution: Manhattan SCALE™:
Supply Chain Architected for Logistics Execution,
Supply Chain Intelligence

Fashion Biz selects Manhattan to optimise warehouse procedures and improve efficiency

Fashion Biz Seeks Scalable IT Solution to Support Move Away from Manual Based System

Fashion Biz (Aust) Pty Ltd is one of the largest suppliers of apparel, including quality uniforms, work wear and promotional apparel (stock service and made-to-order) to the Australasian market. Having originally established operations in the New Zealand market in 1989, the company has operated successfully in Australia for over a decade with distribution centres in Melbourne and Sydney, as well as showrooms in Brisbane and third-party distributorships in Perth and Adelaide.

Following a period of continued and steady growth, Fashion Biz made the decision to review its warehouse management operations with a view to moving from a manual paper-based system, to an automated, paperless supply chain IT system based on industry best practice. The company wanted to upgrade the technology infrastructure that supported its warehouse operations in order to facilitate and sustain its ongoing growth strategy.

In particular, Fashion Biz wanted to implement a WMS that would be robust enough to effectively address the issues the company encountered through the use of a manual based system, which often proved time consuming and counter productive. Some of the key challenges the company wanted to overcome included:

- Inventory inaccuracy
- Low visibility of supply chain activities across interstate warehouses
- Poor space utilisation in the warehouse
- Lack of stock visibility
- Time intensive picking and packing procedures

“We previously operated a paper-based warehouse management system with manual pick slips,” explained, Frank Fuller, national operations manager at Fashion Biz. “We were tracking bulk inventory in Excel. It quickly became apparent we

Challenge:

To transition from a manual, paper-based warehouse management system to a paperless system with the scalability to support continued company growth.

Solution:

Manhattan SCALE selected for its full range of warehouse optimisation capabilities, including its ability to improve flow of goods, order accuracy, inventory control and visibility.

Results:

Melbourne warehouse facility has delivered record daily output since implementing Manhattan SCALE. Other benefits include increased stock accuracy; improved picking and packing; enhanced workflow and labour management processes; and improved space allocation.

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required a proven technology-based warehouse management solution that offered a range of capabilities to help us achieve a number of critical goals including increased stock accuracy and improved picking and packing processes.”

“Previously we were conducting one stock take per year. Given the size of our Melbourne warehouse in particular it was simply too difficult to track inventory levels. Our ERP system was telling us one thing, while the stock on the shelf was saying something completely different. We were constantly finding it difficult to allocate staff effectively and did not have full visibility of where stock was actually located within the warehouse.”



Another key component in making the decision to move to a paperless WMS was the need for Fashion Biz to reassess its existing warehouse management processes. The company wanted to implement a solution that offered the scalability to support the introduction of a number of new procedures in a reliable and stable way.

“It was so important for us to pursue a paperless strategy throughout our warehouse operations so we could re-evaluate, and where required, update our existing processes. Having the ability to track an order from the moment it is placed until the final invoice has been printed using a paperless system, represents a much stronger proposition than a manual system, which tends to be much more vulnerable and open to human error.”

“The environmental aspect was also a big driver for us. We wanted our facilities to be as ‘green’ as possible,” explained, Fuller. “Fashion Biz has worked hard over the last few years to create a paperless environment across its entire order fulfilment process. In addition to reducing the volume of paper consumed, each stage of our supply chain has become more efficient. Manhattan SCALE has been a major component in driving this improvement in our warehouses.”

“From the complete integration of our web store through to the warehouse, our customers have complete visibility of their orders in real time, including live inventory availability, order status and detailed delivery tracking. Teamed with reduced order turnaround times, our customer service performance has improved significantly. Customers are now able to purchase online with confidence due to higher levels of stock accuracy and purchase order visibility.”

Fashion Biz Chooses Manhattan SCALE for Full Range of Warehouse Optimisation Capabilities

Following a competitive tender, Fashion Biz chose the Manhattan SCALE solution primarily for its flexibility and scalability.

“We felt Manhattan SCALE was by far the best fit for our business. The highly configurable and flexible nature of Manhattan SCALE really sets it apart from competitive offerings. We also knew quite quickly that Manhattan would be a great company to partner with.”

“We chose Manhattan because of its proven track record in the area of supply chain optimisation. We knew it offered best-in-class solutions so were confident we could work with them to implement a solution that could fit our specific business needs,” said Fuller.

Manhattan SCALE is a portfolio of distribution management solutions built on the Microsoft .NET development platform and the Microsoft Windows Server® and Microsoft SQL Server® family of products. By leveraging sophisticated optimisation techniques, Manhattan SCALE enables companies to tie together processes, data and workflows to improve supply chain operations.

Having successfully leveraged the Manhattan SCALE solution for a period of three years within its Melbourne facility, Fashion Biz made the decision to upgrade to the latest version of the solution a year ago. This version of the solution has been designed to deliver improved flow of goods, order accuracy and on time delivery through its enhanced inventory control and visibility features.

Commenting on the company's decision to upgrade to the latest version of Manhattan SCALE, Fuller said, "The latest release of the Manhattan SCALE solution is ideal for fast-growing companies like ours, as it can be scaled up or down quickly to easily fit and support our specific warehouse operations and procedures."

"We were in the process of upgrading our broader IT infrastructure and knew the time was right to take the next step. The upgrade to the latest version of Manhattan SCALE proved relatively seamless so the overall impact to our business has been extremely positive," explained Fuller.

At the same time the business was upgrading the solution in its Melbourne facility, Fashion Biz happened to be moving its Sydney distribution operation to a new, purpose-built, site. So, for the previous three years, having run the Melbourne facility on the Manhattan system and its original Sydney facility on a purely manual basis, the business implemented the latest version of Manhattan SCALE at its new Sydney facility at the same time as upgrading the system in Melbourne.

Fashion Biz Reaps Innumerable Rewards with Manhattan SCALE Including Improved Workflow & Labour Management

Having leveraged Manhattan SCALE for a number of years Fashion Biz has, and continues to enjoy, a number of benefits that have significantly improved the overall efficiency and productivity of its warehouse operations—both prior to, and since upgrading to the latest version of the solution.

In the first instance, Fashion Biz has been able to resolve a series of basic, but critical warehouse management issues including a significant improvement in-stock accuracy and inventory control.

"When we first implemented Manhattan SCALE in Melbourne a number of years ago, among the first benefits we enjoyed from an operational perspective, was the overwhelming improvement in the visibility of inventory and subsequently, a much higher level of stock accuracy."

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"With the Sydney and Melbourne warehouses now running Manhattan SCALE, we are now able to trace every box back to a specific order and date. If there's an issue with our stock, we can track it effortlessly. The level of quality assurance we now have is immeasurable compared to before. Manhattan SCALE has given us true FIFO (first in, first out)," explained Fuller.

The ability for the company to accurately determine what stock is in each batch, as opposed to the total stock holding per SKU, has played a particularly important role in helping them achieve this.



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“We simply have so much more control over our stock now. We have also become better able to manage space utilisation within our facilities to ensure picking and packing practices are carried out in a much quicker and more efficient way,” explained Fuller.



In addition, Fashion Biz was particularly impressed with the increased efficiencies the solution afforded them, particularly in terms of tracking its warehouse management performance in terms of workflow and labour management.

“As a business grows, a manual pick/pack system is simply unsustainable. You are forced to keep increasing staff numbers, which drives up costs. Since introducing Manhattan SCALE we have significantly improved our labour management processes so the right staff members are allocated to the areas where they are needed most,” said Fuller.

The productivity gains that Fashion Biz has enjoyed have also been impressive. Since upgrading to the recent version of Manhattan SCALE, Fashion Biz has been able to process over 1,000 orders per day at its Melbourne-based facility.

“This is a milestone achievement for us. This represents a 60% increase on our previous daily record. Having the support of Manhattan SCALE has meant we have been able to scale up or down our operational output as required. Staff training is simplified, as we no longer need to rely on manual processes, which allows the facilities to be more reactive to market requirements.” said Fuller.

“Ultimately, Manhattan SCALE has an unrivalled degree of configurability and scale and offers a full range of capabilities ranging from supply chain intelligence to labour management components, so you can continually leverage value added services offered by the solution as your company continues to evolve and grow. Following the success we’ve had to date, we plan to roll out the solution at our New Zealand (Auckland) warehouse in the near future,” Fuller concluded.

Learn more about Manhattan Associates and our solutions:

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