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Large Furniture Distribution Center's Investment in Segway i2 Fleet Improves Employee Mobility and Efficiency

CUSTOMER:

Raymour & Flanigan Furniture
Liverpool, NY

CHALLENGES:

Improve mobility of management to efficiently travel throughout a 600,000 square foot distribution center

Empower managers to quickly move from indoors to outside and between 78 shipping/receiving doors to meet furniture and delivery dispatch goals as well as resolve inventory issues

Complement the company's comprehensive initiative to reduce its carbon footprint

SOLUTION:

A fleet of three Segway i2 PTs that:

Enable supervisors to avoid wasting time walking, improve transit speed across the distribution center and ensure productivity is maximized

Provide Raymour & Flanigan associates the flexibility to easily maneuver through narrow aisles and around corners

Allow associates to streamline the process of overseeing the off-loading of trailers, recycling of material and loading of furniture in outdoor lots



Raymour & Flanigan Furniture is a family-owned furniture company with nearly 90 locations in the northeastern United States. It's one of the nation's fastest growing furniture retailers largely because of its focus on superior customer service and a guarantee to deliver furniture within three business days.

That type of guarantee requires that Raymour & Flanigan's team is consistently operating its largest facility, the 600,000 square foot Northern Distribution Center located in New York, at optimum efficiency.

Adding Segway Personal Transporters (PTs) to the distribution center's arsenal of tools was initially proposed by the senior management team. They were familiar with the product and felt strongly that it could make a real difference in significantly improving the transit time and productivity of supervisors, operations managers and the security guards who had routinely been walking long distances throughout the vast facility.

"We arranged for a Segway PT 30-day trial to determine if the product would deliver the performance improvements and value that we were hoping for in regard to our team's overall mobility and responsiveness," said Greg Hoalcraft, Regional Director of Distribution. "The trial was incredibly successful! We were completely sold on the attributes of the product. We also bought into the fact that we could save a supervisor's time and therefore easily justify the purchase of three PTs in no time."

The distribution center is open seven days per week, takes in an average of 4,000 pieces of furniture each day and ships out just as many. In addition, supervisors are required to travel throughout the facility, quickly move between its 78 shipping/receiving doors, as well as travel outside to ensure that deliveries and dispatch goals are being met and the flow of tractor trailer trucks is moving efficiently.

"Shortly after our transportation services team, who had previously been on foot, began using Segway PTs they realized how helpful they would be in monitoring trailers on multiple outdoor lots to double-check daily inventory," said Greg. "This allowed us to orchestrate the off-loading of our trailers from the field. In one step supervisors could direct materials to be recycled and furniture to be loaded for delivery. The usability and maneuverability of the PTs is tremendous."

Each of Raymour Flanigan's PTs is equipped with side cargo systems that provide supervisors convenient storage. Riders pack and carry the handheld scan guns, clipboards and paperwork they refer to during the day. Another distinct feature that appealed to the distribution center team was the PT's zero turning radius, which allows for superior maneuverability.

"It's imperative that associates have the flexibility to maneuver safely through narrow aisles and around corners as well as by staged furniture scenes and in a very busy shipping and receiving area," added Hoalcraft.

In addition to being one of the nation's fastest growing retailers, Raymour & Flanigan is also an environmental leader in the furniture industry. The company's 41,000 square foot recycling center, which is located adjacent to the distribution center, recycles more than 8 million pounds of paper and packaging waste annually. The company's selection of the electric Segway PT further reinforces its commitment to green initiatives.

"The fact that the Segway PT does not require gas and boasts zero emissions is in direct alignment with the company's goal to reduce its carbon footprint," said Vicky D'Agostino, Director of Communications. "Our PTs empower the team to travel hundreds of miles each day while still being environmentally friendly."

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