



Wise Robotics increase pick rates by 233% at A. Perry Ltd.

Founded in 1925, A. Perry Ltd. is the UK's largest manufacturer, wholesaler and distributor of hinges, hardware, gate hardware, fencing hardware, fixing fasteners, chains, rope, ironmongery and garden décor. In recent years, the family-run firm has also successfully created two sub-brands, Primus and Perry Equestrian.

Challenges

- Stock was difficult to manage due to the drastic variations of weight for different items and components.
- Struggled to commit to same day despatch and next day delivery.
- Planned growth couldn't be secured without exceeding warehouse limitations and resulting in considerable costs.
- Heavily reliant on temporary labour for peak seasons created significant increased costs.

Results

- Rapid access to 4,000 picking locations containing 15,000 product lines while only requiring two packing stations to complete customer orders.
- Guaranteed same day despatches and next day delivery.
- Requirement for pickers has decreased from 11 to 2.
- 4 x increase in warehouse throughput with just 2 picking stations.
- Saving costs on additional warehouses, temporary workers and rectifying inaccuracies.
- Increased speed and efficiency with order processing through seamless order entry.

Our Solution

- 15 Fully Automated Robots (Q7) capable of lifting 1000kg.
- 330 Movable Pods.
- 2 Picking spotlights at stations.
- Full integration with existing ERP / WMS solution.
- Two months implementation time.



Increasing Demand

Having launched in 1925, A. Perry Ltd. is well accustomed to evolving to meet the demands of their constantly developing marketplace.

Nevertheless, when the business reached its largest ever customer base in 2019, the cost to fulfil this ever-increasing demand threatened both profit margins and the customer experience. To keep up with the increasing customer demand, A. Perry Ltd. needed to expand their resources, labour and warehousing space. However, the expense and disruption this would have caused the business presented more pitfalls than resolutions.

Watch the A. Perry Ltd. video case study

We visited A Perry Ltd. at their site in Cradley Heath to explore how their business has transformed since implementing the robotics solution.



“We had seen growth year-on-year and the only way we could facilitate that, other than automation, was by adding more staff and more equipment. And then, at some stage, we would outgrow our site. The aisles were already congested with forklift trucks, and the warehouse just wouldn’t have coped with that. It’s a massive factor when you look at the costings. We’ve got a 100,000 sq ft facility here, the aisles would have been rammed, jammed full of pickers and machinery.”

Chris Perry, Operations Director

Weight:	318 kg
Lifting height:	60mm
Rated load:	1000 kg
Rated speed:	1.2 ms
Endurance:	9 hrs
Rotation Diameter:	1265 mm

Implementing Wise Robotics

Fortunately, A. Perry Ltd. had a strong relationship with the provider of their OrderWise WMS software, Wise Technology Group, who had recently made significant investments into their Robotics Division, Wise Robotics. In addition, they had also become an official UK partner of global robotics solution provider, Hikrobot.

“We’ve worked with Wise Technology Group for over eight-years and when they brought out their Wise Robotics’ division, we started working with them to develop our systems to improve our technology around robotics.”

Guy Perry, Managing Director

Wise Robotics, a full solutions provider for robotic automation within warehouses and manufacturing facilities, worked closely with the A. Perry's team to understand their struggles and goals.

After careful analysis and calculation of A. Perry's physical warehouse setup, stock control processes and workflows, Wise Robotics ascertained that their Q7 robot solution and moveable pods would be perfect for A. Perry. The excessive weight of their stock and materials, which is acquired through multiple suppliers, was a significant factor in this. The Q7 robot holds a rated load of 1000kg and is an excellent goods-to-person solution, as well as A-to-B transit.

Another significant factor in choosing to invest in flexible robotics instead of a fixed solution, was the future scope for growth that the Wise Robotics' solution would enable A. Perry.

"If we put in other solutions that needed fixed cranes or fixed facilities, then they wouldn't be scalable. This solution is totally scalable."

Guy Perry, Managing Director

Within two months of the sign-off, Wise Robotics fully implemented 15 Q7 robots and 330 moveable pods. The speed and efficiency of the project delivery helped ensure the A. Perry's team could keep delivering their services with minimal disruption.

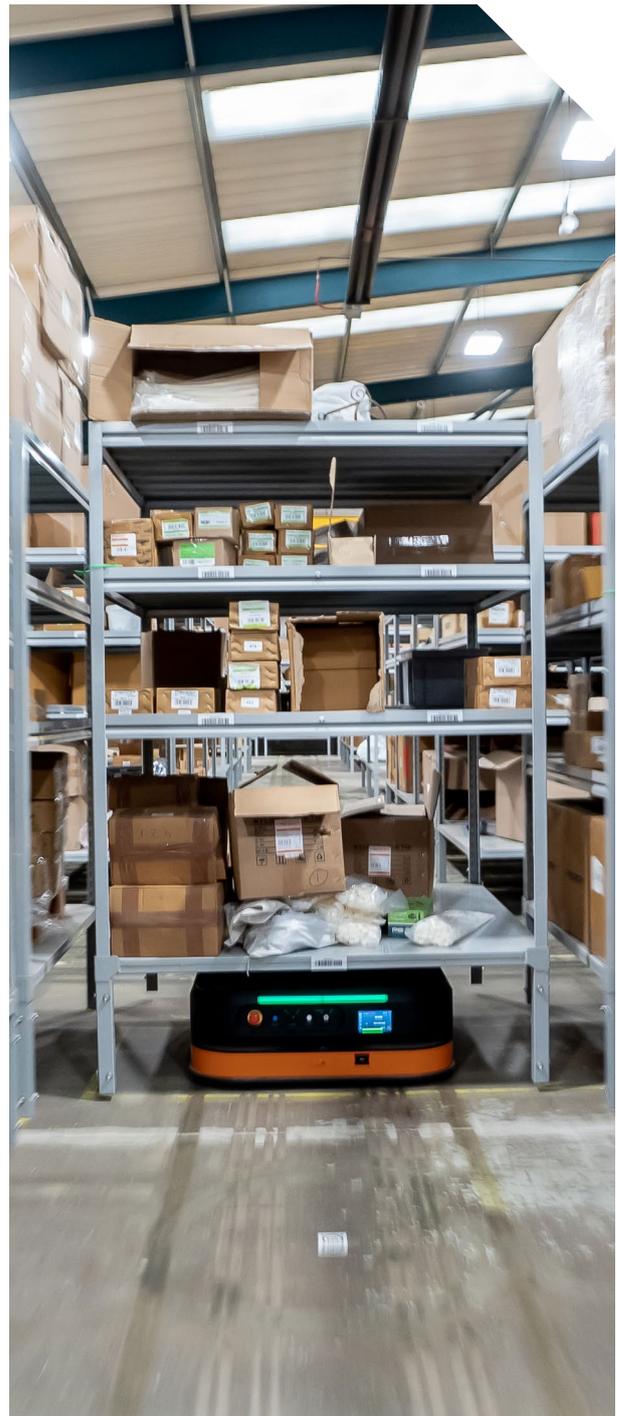
"From the actual sign-off to the go-live day was only a two-month period. So, Wise Robotics has been brilliant. We've got a good relationship with them."

Chris Perry, Operations Manager

Naturally, with any new technology or software being brought into a business, there is a period of adjustment, but the Wise Robotics team were there to support A. Perry every step of the way.

"Wise Robotics is always there to help and support. They understand our business. It's not like they just give you a product and walk away. It's a project through the whole life span of the partnership really, and long may it continue."

Chris Perry, Operations Manager



Picking and Packing Efficiencies

The impact and benefits of having their Wise Robotics' solution installed, and fully integrated with their existing OrderWise WMS software, were proving to deliver an incredibly short-term ROI.

Automated robotics was not just enabling A. Perry to manage and control existing, growing demand, it was also enabling them to prepare for future demand and achieve more efficient order fulfilment.

Picks per
hour have
increased by
233%

3 people can hit
1,600
lines per day.
Saving over **70%**
on labour cost.

"Instead of just picking one item for that one order, the robots are picking a month's worth of stock at a time so, they're replenishing a month's worth of stock into that robot. So, that might fulfil 20 to 30 to 40 orders. We used to have six pickers and two packers. The difference is, where we were picking 30-35 lines an hour, now we can pick up to 60-100 lines an hour, with just one picker."

Chris Rowley, Head of Despatch





Staffing Levels

Although the robots were performing at unrivalled speeds to the former picking and packing workers, the robotics transformation has meant that A. Perry Ltd. has been able to focus employee resources on other areas. With a greater focus on stock control and replenishment, this has helped deliver further growth, rather than simply reducing their headcount. They have also reduced their need to bring in expensive, temporary labour during seasonal peak periods.

"We're not looking at reducing staff, we're looking at reducing costs. Previously, we had to bring in extra labour, temporary labour, which is very expensive, especially during seasonal times, so that will definitely reduce. Now, we're enabled to deploy our existing staff, who we intend to keep, into other areas to enable us to grow even more."

Guy Perry, Managing Director

Customer Service

In addition to providing their staff with a much more controlled work environment and seamless workflow, the Wise Robotics' implementation has also provided A. Perry's customers with a smoother user experience when ordering. For customers, making transactions is as painless as possible and A. Perry's can maintain their promised service levels.

90% of orders
now go through the
robotic grid.

"Gone are the days where we could have a customer order at 9 o'clock in the morning and wouldn't be on a picker's handset or a picker's pick run until midday or thereafter."

Patrick Corcoran, Commercial Sales Manager

With the robots in place, A. Perry can process their orders at a significantly greater speed, then have the correct stock picked, packed and despatched to guarantee next day delivery. Although their existing OrderWise WMS solution helped automate these processes, without the speed and load capacity of their robots, this was one of their biggest challenges.

**Order line processing increased by 346%
a day, reaching heights of 461%**



The Future

While A. Perry's investment and partnership with Wise Robotics has provided them with unlimited growth, they can set the pace of this and expand at their convenience.

"We were around about a £9 million turnover when we began working with Wise Technology Group, and now we're breaking well past £17 million. So, by working with Wise Robotics closely, they've enabled us to grow and to develop to the size we are. Going forward, we've got some big strategies and some large plans to double again. We've doubled where we are today, and we intend to do that again."

Guy Perry, Managing Director

To secure this growth, the business is already planning to invest in more robots, and with the support of Wise Robotics, they have total assurance in their ability to do this.

"The introduction of the robotic warehouse has given us far more capacity and we're actually chasing bigger businesses than we've ever been able to cope with, with absolute confidence."

Patrick Corcoran, Commercial Sales Manager



Visit the A. Perry Ltd. website



Wise Robotics brings expert experience and elite equipment together to offer the best quality automation solutions to the UK market. To provide the very best in flexible warehouse automation, Wise Robotics is partnering with Hikrobot.

Combining Wise Robotics' nearly thirty years of warehouse management experience with Hikrobot's outstanding technology, our clients can receive world-leading, field-defining warehouse automation solutions.