

## RETURNS AUTOMATION – RETAIL AND ECOMMERCE

Faced with labor shortages, tight space, and the need for flexibility, a major retailer partnered with Trew to automate a 1.4 million sq ft returns center. With a \$20–\$40 million investment, the solution streamlined flow, introduced recycling initiatives, and delivered scalable automation. The result? Faster processing, easier maintenance, and a more efficient operation—powered by Trew’s creative engineering and deep returns expertise.

### Project Overview

- Type: Returns Center
- Facility Size: 1.4 million sq ft.
- Cost of Solution: \$20-\$40 million
- Success Factor: ROI of Solution

#### Contents:

- Large integrated system
- SmartMoves-WX® WES
- (4) Aisle Mini-Load ASRS
- (2) Aisle Shuttle ASRS
- Cross Belt Disposition Sorter
- Other: Trew Resident Maintenance Program



### Challenges

*System Flexibility and Scalability:* Designing and implementing a facility to manage bulk and non-conveyable items, ensuring adaptability to fluctuating demand, peak season, and spikes.

*Space Constraints / Product Handling:* The facility needed to accommodate bulk and non-conveyable items, incorporate a storage plan, and include conveyor compatibility into the design of the solution.

*Labor Shortages:* The client was facing labor shortages to help run the returns center.

### Solutions

*Streamline Flow and Labor Optimization:* The solution created a streamlined flow, allowing the client to optimize labor and reduce workforce.

*Recycle, Destruction, and Resale Initiatives:* Recycling, destruction, and resale initiatives were tailored through system enhancements, such as interfacing with WES software for seamless integration with the customer’s returns system.

*Post-Launch Adjustments:* Improved the system's efficiency in recycling and destruction, ensuring sustainability goals were met while handling anticipated volumes.

### Results

*System Flexibility and Scalability:* Trew's team delivered a solution that successfully maintained the client's delivery schedule with no delays despite challenges posed by Covid-19. The system has sufficient headroom and flexibility to support volume growth and demand.

*Maintenance and Support:* Trew's team runs a full resident maintenance staff onsite to address any issues and oversees maintenance.

### Why Trew

*Competitive Advantages:* The project was secured due to creative solutions, competitive pricing, and full support for client needs.

*Automation Success:* Automation significantly increased efficiency, reduced manual labor, and enabled streamlined processing of slower-moving SKUs.

*Maintenance Offering:* Trew's resident maintenance offering ensures a dedicated team on staff to address any issues.

*Experience:* Trew's experience in returns logistics and our commitment to long-term partnership

### About TREW

TREW provides automated material handling solutions for integrators and end users, including Warehouse Execution Systems (WES), Warehouse Control Systems (WCS), PLC-based machine controls, high-speed conventional conveyor, motorized driven roller (MDR) conveyor, sortation and services such as conceiving, engineering, technical support, parts, field service and training. Serving the North American retail, warehouse, distribution, manufacturing and ecommerce industries, TREW's experienced staff and broad network of integrator partners enable uncommonly smart solutions scalable to any material handling needs.

### For more information, contact TREW

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