

Patti Perspective

April 2016

Greetings!

We recently completed an end-to-end project with one of our longtime customers, The Mens Wearhouse. It was a fun challenge for our engineers, as we worked to add new technology while repurposing nearly all of the hardware.

Our spotlight is on Mr. Behind-the-scenes himself, Dave Foster. Find out why he's known as the "Pope of Patti Proposals" and the hobbies he's passing down from generation to generation.

Read all the way to the bottom for a peak at our most recent video.

A Tailored Solution

We have been a trusted partner to our client The Mens Wearhouse for more than a decade now. Over the years, we have worked on numerous material handling and sortation control systems projects - from new lines to retrofits, like this one featured in [Modern Materials Handling Magazine](#).

In our most recent projects, we had the privilege of taking on a rebuild of

their sorters from start to finish. Our engineers really enjoy when we have the opportunity to take on an end-to-end project. The challenge of this new project gave the engineers the chance to flex their creative muscles to design and develop a solution to fulfill TMW's wish list.

With TMW's recent acquisition of Joseph A. Bank, the warehouse has many more locations to ship to. This required TMW to create a new warehouse management system (WMS) to coordinate all the stores and facilities. On top of the new WMS system, TMW needed to repurpose their garment sorters to sort inventory by hub, and then sort from hub to store instead of the previous store based sort.

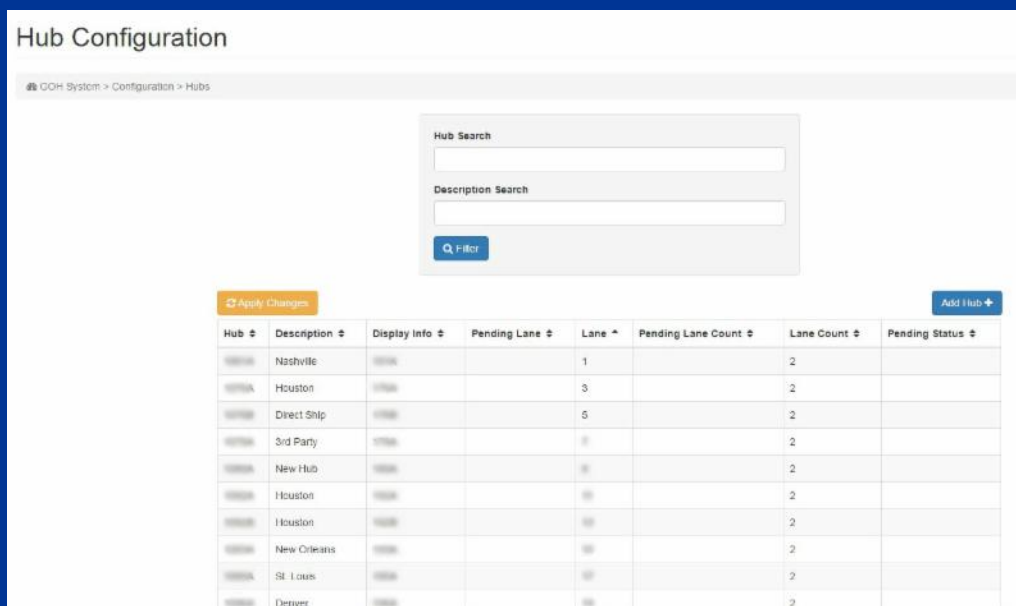
This project was a great example of repurposing old equipment as well as bridging into the new WMS and adding new technology to maximize effectiveness and minimize cost.

On the hardware side, we were able to use the existing sorting hardware (trolleys, hangers, hooks, gates, etc.) and add stationary and handheld barcode scanners. The stationary scanners scan items as they move through the sorter. Warehouse employees can use the handheld scanners as they put trolleys in temporary storage from the hub sorter. They can also use the same scanners to look up where each item is located when they gather trolleys to sort by store.

On the software side, we built everything from scratch. We programmed the controls, created a backend database and a frontend web interface, and integrated to the new WMS and the existing HMIs.

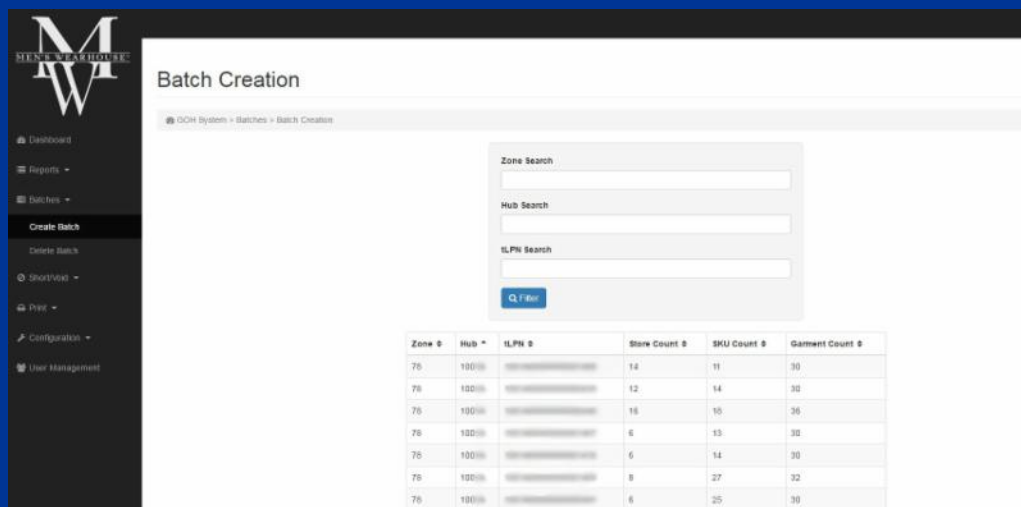


The new WMS manages all inventory across the country. Integration required dozens of little data handoffs between our system and the larger system. Our system simply tracked inventory from the hub sorter through the store sorter exchanging data with the WMS along the way.



The frontend web interface was built specifically for the employees in this facility. It integrates with the existing HMIs, so employees can see what's happening from any computer on the network. It allows the users to build batches, track items, and track productivity.

Building the entire system from scratch - writing all the programs, designing the web interface, creating the applications to interact with the warehouse management system - allowed our engineers to create a solution exactly to TMW's specifications. This system was custom built for them and fits the unique needs of their facility. "This project was fun and challenging due to the complexity of the data and the interactions with the host system," said Ian Mogab, one of our control engineers on the project.



The project had an added challenge of a short timeline and a drop-dead deadline. The system went from idea to implementation in just three months. It was completed in coordination with two other system updates, which all had to be taken live simultaneously. Any delay on our part would have caused a disruption to the entire system. Despite some unforeseen challenges (every project has them!), Patti engineers still had the project complete on time and on budget.

"Despite the tight timeline, Patti Engineering delivered- on time and on budget," said Jason McNair, IT manager at The Men's Wearhouse.

For design and implementation of a custom solution of your own,

[Contact Us](#)

Patti Personnel Spotlight: Dave Foster

This month, Dave Foster celebrated a work anniversary - 21 years! He's legal! Dave was one of the first people to join the Patti Engineering Team back in 1995. Since then, he has moved from Controls Engineer to Senior Engineer, to Engineering Manager, and he is now VP of Engineering.



"Dave started at Patti Engineering when you could count the employees using one hand," said Sam Hoff, CEO of Patti Engineering. "He has contributed to our growth and development over the last 21 years and is an outstanding contributor to repeated success."

Dave describes his role as the "Pope of Patti Proposals." This writer had to laugh out loud at that -because it is true! Dave needs to bless every proposal - and everything in it as being accurate, profitable and reasonable - before it leaves our door. He is also a key player in company strategy, which means he is involved in managing sales, projects, personnel, marketing, and anything else that can come up.



While no one in the office is convinced that Dave actually stops working, he really does have many hobbies outside of work! "Pretty much everything I love to do today started with the close relationship I had with my dad until his death in 1996," Dave says. "Now my life revolves around sharing those passions with my wife and terrific two young sons." Those two main passions are boating and racing.

Dave's dad took a job in Grand Cayman when Dave was 10 years old. He grew up there, graduated from high school, and did an engineering coop there with Caribbean Utilities. "Being on a little rock in

the middle of the Caribbean Sea - you have to develop a love of the water," he says. "That is why boating from port to port throughout the beautiful Great Lakes is such a huge part of how our family spends our free time."

Dave's dad was a flagger at Merritt Speedway, a dirt track in northern Michigan. After moving to Grand Cayman, Dave and his dad would travel back to Michigan almost every summer to attend either an Indy Car or NASCAR race. During college at GMI (Kettering U), he was head Electrical Engineer and main driver in an early government program to create and "performance drive" a Hybrid Electric Vehicle. It was with that team at the 1995 North American International Auto Show where Dave met Sam and Patti.



Dave later partnered with another Patti teammate and got his SCCA road course racing license, racing a Mazda RX-7. But very soon, the racing bug was passed to the next generation. "Before you knew it, both my boys were the ones racing, and I was just crew chief. I haven't

raced since, and have not regretted one second of it." His boys raced MMRA or quarter midget for about 5 years and even got to do a lap of the "Brickyard" - Indianapolis Motor Speedway in their race cars! Dave's oldest son won two Midwest regional championships last season and his son Evan will be racing a racing a full sized 400+HP stock car this year!



[Click here to download as PDF](#)

We work as partners with our clients. When you need an expert to help solve automation challenges, we are here to add value to your solution - enhance efficiency, increase productivity, and work with your team as a trusted resource. Visit our [website](#) for more information on our areas of expertise, or call us (248)364-3200 for a free initial consultation.

Thank you for your interest in Patti Engineering.

Best regards,

Georgia H. Whalen
Director of Marketing
Patti Engineering



Collaboration and Innovation at Manufacturing in America



Collaboration and Innovation at Manufacturing in America

[Click here to view video](#)



Patti
Engineering
PROVEN AUTOMATION SOLUTIONS
Reliable Support • Trusted Partner

**Celebrating 6 Years
in Austin, Texas**

Celebrating Six Years in Austin, Texas

Blog post by Steve Palmgren, VP of Texas Operations

Exactly 6 years ago today, I found myself with two cats in the parking lot of a gas station at 2am...

[Click here to read more](#)

Copyright © 2016. All Rights Reserved.