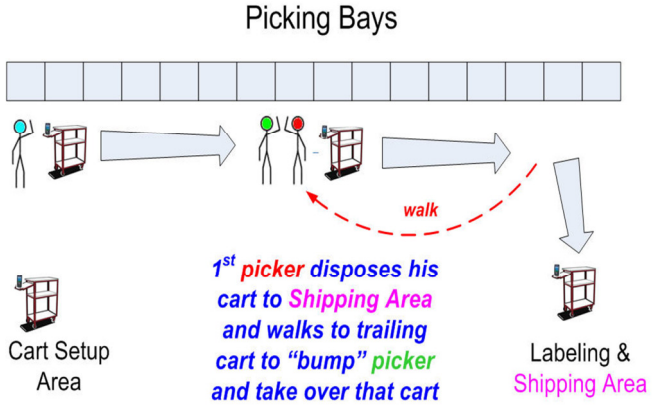
FASTFETCH **Order Fulfillment Technology** FASTFETCH

(US Patents 6,775,588 / 8,019,463)



Dynamic Zone Picking

a.k.a. ***Bump-Back Picking, Toyota Sewing System*** **or** ***The Bucket Brigade***

FASTFETCH ***increases customer satisfaction and efficiency by innovatively combining voice, Bluetooth barcode scanning and light-directed picking to provide FAST, ACCURATE, BATCH PICKING in distribution and manufacturing environments.***

Requiring ***only a PDA*** to control lighted displays on picking bays and putting carts, FastFetch enables cluster picking, reverse logistics and sequenced picking using low-cost wireless infrared communications for **light-directed picking** from storage bays and **light-directed putting** to cart locations. **Voice direction** and wireless Bluetooth **bar code scanning** confirmation is used for locations without lighted displays.

The Challenge: Static Zone Picking

In a typical zone picking scenario, workers are assigned fixed sized, static zones to fulfill orders. Orders typically flow in series through these zones via a conveyor or on carts passed between workers. There are times when a worker in one zone will be overloaded with a large number of picks while a worker in the next zone will be idle waiting for work to be passed from the first worker. Static Zone Picking always leads to unbalanced workloads and significant wasted time.

The FastFetch Solution: Dynamic Zone Picking

Scenario: There are three workers, each with 20 orders on FastFetch carts. When the forward-most worker in the picking area finishes filling his 20 orders, he will dispose of his cart to the shipping area and walk back to the cart in the preceding zone where he will "bump" the worker using that cart. Using a PDA on the cart, the departing worker pushes a "logout" button and the arriving worker pushes his name on the PDA "login" display and resumes picking where the departing worker left off. The departing worker walks back to the cart in his preceding zone and "bumps" that worker and so on until the first worker is "bumped". The first worker then inducts a new cart into the picking area.

In this scenario, the boundaries between zones change, depending on the work required for the orders on each cart. If the orders on a cart require a large number of picks in a zone, that zone will be smaller than one in which less picking is required. The picking zones are thus ***Dynamic*** in size and the locations of zone boundaries are based on the cart picking load required in each zone. Because FastFetch directs workers via voice and lights, there is no question where an arriving worker should resume picking.

Key advantages of FastFetch's Dynamic Zones are:

- Workers are never idle waiting for orders to be passed from preceding zones
- Accountability for picking is automatically captured by FastFetch so problems discovered by auditors or Customer Service personnel can be quickly researched and appropriate "career counseling" can be conducted
- No changes need be made to systems to resize zones when workers are absent
- Fast workers, who are paid on incentives, are never "penalized" due to the slower speed of other workers
- Studies have shown that picking efficiency can typically be improved by 25 - 50% (Dr. John Bartholdi, Georgia Tech Logistics Institute).

Dynamic Zone Picking with FastFetch is a great way to enable your workers be much more efficient and productive!