



COMPASS  
ENGINEERING GROUP

## Case Study: Gordon Food Service

Shepherdsville, KY Distribution Center

Needing a batch and sortation control upgrade, Compass Engineering Group provided a software system solution to provide supervisory control to Gordon Food Service's control systems.

2/6/2004

**COMPANY OVERVIEW:**

Gordon Food Service® is North America's largest family-owned broad line foodservice distributor. Their company mission is centered around their customers and they dedicate themselves to providing quality products and solutions to help drive their customers' success. Since founded in

1897, Gordon Food Service has weathered a lot of changes. They've even instituted a fair number of them, leading the industry into new and more efficient ways of doing business. But their values remain the same as those of the 23-year-old entrepreneur who started it all: hard work, reliability, and integrity are the only business practices that really matter.<sup>1</sup>

**THE CHALLENGE:**

The Shepherdsville, KY Distribution Center for Gordon Food Service needed an updated and improved batch and sortation control solution for their outbound system. Already having a warehouse management system and a real time floor control PLC device, Compass Engineering Group needed to provide a software system that would enable GFS to have complete control over their outbound batch and sortation control mechanisms.

**THE STRATEGY:**

To provide a modern and reliable controls and software system solutions, Compass Engineering Group offered a user friendly graphical interface to act as a supervisory-level software system for the control of the outbound conveyor system. The primary capabilities and functionalities of this software system included:

- Batch management
- Sortation control
- Wonderware Human Machine Interface (HMI)
- Graphical control stations for operators
- Easy-to-use status information for maintenance personnel

**THE SOLUTION:**

In order to maintain the sequence of cartons being picked in the pick modules, Compass Engineering Group proposed to provide the batch control functions with the base Compass Order Routing System (CORS) product. The CORS batch control monitored, displayed, and controlled the release of cartons from the GFS pick modules and central merge, as well as integrating with the already existing floor-level PLCs to provide a complete batch sequencing system. The Compass Order Routing System served many purposes for GFS, providing them with the following batch and sortation control information:

- Scanner statistics – Provides maintenance personnel insight into the current sort scanner performance.

- Divert counts – Allows operations to view counts of packages diverted to each chute for the current shift, and the reasons for non-diverts. Counts for all chutes, including reject, unassigned, and no-read lanes are displayed.
- Rate monitor – Allows the operator to view percentages, counts, and rates of packages that were scanned, sorted and unsorted, and packages that were not diverted based on PLC I/O and logic overriding the divert assignment. It also displays the current rate in a meter graphic along with the minimum, average, and peak rate (packages per minute).
- Historical scanner statistics – Grants maintenance personnel the ability to view scanner statistics over a configurable period of time.



#### THE END RESULT:

Upon project completion, the distribution center in Shepherdsville, KY had a new batch control and sortation system. With Compass Engineering Group's sophisticated Compass Order Routing System, Gordon Food Service has been able to more accurately monitor and interact with their controls system. With another effective and efficient approach to industrial needs, Compass Engineering Group has answered their customer's needs in a timely and professional manner that adheres to the highest standards of control and software solutions.

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<sup>1</sup> Information from [www.gfs.com](http://www.gfs.com)