

Span-Track Chosen...At-A-Glance.

Patented New Carton Flow Track Chosen Over Obsolete Plastic Wheel Track.

After three quarters of a century doing business as Keith Clark - one of Sidney, New York's oldest manufacturing companies - President Doug Willies announced the company was officially changing its name to The At-A-Glance Group (a move made to establish a higher level of recognition for both their stationary products and the company).

A few months later, the newly-named At-A-Glance Group decided their manufacturing warehouses and distribution centers needed a production facelift as well. They had the daunting task of finding solutions to the problems plaguing their 715,000 square feet of manufacturing space, of which 275,000 square feet was warehouse and distribution. One of the major issues At-A-Glance was facing was the number of SKUs they could slot in certain areas of their picking operation. According to Tom Brown, Distribution Supervisor for At-A-Glance, limited space at ground level was a major concern. "As a team we had to develop a new system. We knew if we wanted to expand, we had to go up. One of our concerns with the flow track we were using was reliability. We had problems with cases not flowing all the way to the pick end, and if you're having problems with cases getting stuck on the plastic wheel track, it then becomes a safety issue." So the team went looking for a product that was reliable in its operation. They turned to a local Unex distributor who suggested Unex Span-Track carton flow track. Brown said, "We found its flow much more reliable."



"By letting us utilize upper level case picking, we were able to slot everything we wanted."

With the help of Span-Track, At-A-Glance went from slotting approximately 500 SKUs in the past to over 1200 SKUs for case picking. "What that does," Brown emphasized "is enable us to lighten the volume coming through what we refer to as our "each pick" area, allowing us to single slot everything in the upper levels, creating the room we desperately needed." Brown points out another advantage to using Span-Track carton flow track, "it has significantly reduced the picker's walking by eleven fold. It was a total win."



Middle: Unex Conveyors Move Product to Distribution.
Bottom: Span-Track (High-Profile Model) Brings Cartons to Pickers.



“Once Span-Track was in place, the one thing I clearly noticed was that it could handle a variety of carton sizes.”

After the initial investigation, the team found lots of inherent problems with how things worked in the past. Since At-A-Glance produces a “dated” product, every spring they had to perform a re-slotting process. They had only a short window to move out the old edition and re-stock the new edition year.

At-A-Glance had to go through a whole re-layout of the “each pick” zones. Plus, since they deal with a multitude of different size cartons and weights, the actual re-slotting process was a nightmare.

“The biggest problem we saw was during the re-slotting process. We were always changing our slotting because of the carton shapes. With plastic wheel track, you had to constantly move them around and set your guides up in-between. So the actual process of re-slotting became a very cumbersome and time-consuming project with plastic wheel track.

Since converting to Span-Track, Brown has noticed a significant reduction in maintenance labor costs. “Once you set-up Span-Track, you don’t have to maintain it that much. It’s so much easier. Out of all the sections, we have to adjust maybe two percent, and that’s compared to 98-percent of the plastic wheel track that normally had to be moved.”

Another advantage to using Span-Track is its label holder. “At-A-Glance labels everything, whether it’s the picking or replenishing side, we have to label what goes where.” Brown said that with plastic wheel track, they had to go out and purchase additional price



At-A-Glance’s manufacturing facility stretches an incredible one-half mile from end to end.

channels to apply to the shelving units. That’s something At-A-Glance doesn’t have to do anymore because labels are supplied with Span-Track at no additional cost and are placed into the hanging bracket or into the product itself. “Having it built in like that makes it look uniform. It doesn’t look like you’ve added anything. It looks like it’s part of the system.

Walt Weaver, At-A-Glance’s Distribution Manager echoes Tom Brown’s sentiments. “We have plastic wheel track here. We’ve had it since 1985 at the beginning of the project. Span-Track is obviously better. The reasons: ease of installation, ease of moving it around, and the quality of the package delivery.” Weaver adds, “as you watch them install it, it looks so easy. It snaps in and snaps out. You don’t have to mess with the rollers, and the dividers, and the pins.

In his closing remarks Weaver said, “Everyone in my organization is sold on Span-Track. They’re happy with what we did. We brought in the sample way back when and set it up. We tested it. We let our employees look at it to see how it worked. Basically everyone was sold from day one. And they still are. Depending on our budget, we may go back and replace all of our other track with Span-Track.”

Ten months later, At-A-Glance continued its plan of converting their plastic wheel track to Span-Track by adding another 456 Span-Track sections to their pallet rack.



AT-A-GLANCE

(formerly Keith Clark) is located in Sidney, New York and is the world’s leading designer and manufacturer of time management, planning, organizing, and record-keeping products - from simple daily flip calendar pads, to sophisticated organizers, and everything in between.

UNEX, located in Jackson, New Jersey, manufactures a broad line of conveyors and carton flow equipment. Unex products are sold nationally through material handling distributors. For more information, please call 800-334-UNEX (8639). Fax: 732-928-2828 www.unex.com