badger
technologies

Busy Beaver
YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD HOME IMPROVEMENT CENTER!

INDUSTRY
Retail - Home Improvement

COUNTRY
United States

EMPLOYEES
400+

WEBSITE
busybeaver.com

CHALLENGES

- Tracking price integrity in a time of frequent pricing changes due to a turbulent market
- Ensuring accurate product location and availability, along with planogram compliance, is exceedingly difficult in a store with over 33,500 stock-keeping units (SKUs)
- Deployment of electronic shelf labels required seamless integration with inventory shelf scans

SOLUTION

- Badger Technologies' multipurpose autonomous robot addresses price integrity, out-of-stock and planogram compliance issues
- The robot's open application programming interface (API) can easily integrate into existing store systems, enabling new wins for the retailer
- Analytics and reports generated from the robot can be formatted in the form the retailer prefers

BENEFITS

- Time spent on inventory checks has decreased from 80 hours a week to 40 minutes daily for the retailer's newest and second largest store
- The robot discovers missed sales opportunities by identifying items that have been misplaced
- Data and reports from the robot's scans get delivered to the corporate merchandising team, allowing seamless and real-time communications on inventory

Busy Beaver Building Centers Finds Its Technology Sweet Spot with Badger Technologies' Multipurpose Autonomous Robot

Retail Automation Program with Badger Technologies Improves Inventory Management, Price Integrity and Planogram Compliance

One of the biggest challenges of running a chain of retail stores is replicating the customer experience consistently across all locations. But most retailers experience similar challenges around inventory planning, planogram compliance and price integrity – regardless of location.

When the pandemic hit and created a domino effect of supply chain issues, logistics gridlocks and labor shortages, retailers had to face a new reality. To overcome new and existing issues, the team at Busy Beaver Building Centers, an operator of 25 full-line home improvement centers in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia, turned to technology.

"We started looking at technologies to address a lot of our issues because our employees want to focus on customer service and helping customers rather than doing price changes and counting inventory," said Adam Gunnett, director of IT & marketing at Busy Beaver Building Centers.

In October 2021, Busy Beaver launched a pilot program at one of its smaller stores to test Badger Technologies' multipurpose autonomous robot for monitoring on-shelf product availability and verifying the prices of 30,000 SKUs. Following the successful pilot, the team is deploying production robots starting with their new store in Delmont, Pennsylvania.

"We relentlessly look for innovative ways to increase efficiencies and empower our associates to provide legendary customer service. We expect to demonstrate how Busy Beaver can keep our shelves fully stocked with the right mix of products — at the right prices — without overburdening our dedicated team members," said Gunnett.

badger technologies

Delivering Unprecedented Accuracy and Time Savings with Retail Automation

Busy Beaver's new Delmont store is also the chain's second largest with over 33,500 SKUs to be managed – more than double the inventory of an average home improvement store. In addition to the regular items you can expect to find, this one carries sporting goods, camping goods and even automotive products that the other Busy Beaver locations do not stock. But the biggest challenge in managing all this inventory comes down to sheer volume and errors in inventory processes.

"Inventory could be in the wrong spot or top stock. It could be a paperwork error. Errors could be anywhere," said Tracy Klein, a general manager for Busy Beaver Building Centers. Before the multipurpose autonomous robot, manual inventory checks took over 80 hours a week, with several employees dedicated to the effort. Each employee would manually scan every out-of-stock backlog and transmit that data into a report. The store manager would then go through the report, have a colleague confirm the manual scans and then make physical adjustments as needed.

"With the new technology, the Badger robot runs at night when we're not open and scans all the empty hooks. We get a report in the morning. That process now takes us half an hour to 40 minutes. The Badger robot has been a wonderful technology, saving us time and making our inventory more accurate," said Klein.

"I think that's the biggest point," added Kevin Michel, general manager for the store. "The robot frees up our employees to do the things that we need them to do. We are now focusing on other opportunities in the store that need attention that we would not have been able to do before the Badger robot. It's a game changer. It really is."

> " Inventory could be in the wrong spot or top stock. It could be a paperwork error. Errors could be anywhere. "
>
> **TRACY KLEIN**
> General Manager,
> Busy Beaver Building Center

badger technologies

Automating Price Integrity During Turbulent Times

Retailers have been at the center of the pandemic – feeling the impact of inflation, supply chain issues, demand fluctuations and so much more every step of the way. In addition to the Badger autonomous robot, Busy Beaver's store in Delmont is the first home improvement center in the United States to have full deployment of electronic shelf labels (ESLs).

"With all the issues in today's market, we're seeing more price changes than we ever had. We are doing now what used to be a month's worth of price changes in a week," said Gunnett. "Trying to keep up with that is just a task that is unmanageable by people." With ESLs, product pricing is automatically updated whenever a price change is made on a central database, removing the literal legwork of making these changes from employees' responsibilities. When the Badger robot is running its nightly inventory scan at the store, it is also checking pricing accuracy for all products. This additional integration is all thanks to the multipurpose autonomous robot's open API.

"Badger brings a lot of advantages to the retail industry, especially on the technology integration side," stated William "BJ" Santiago, chief executive officer of Badger Technologies, a product division of Jabil. "We've developed our technology to have open APIs that can integrate with the existing store's systems." While the goal of each store may be to deliver a consistent experience, each retail store has unique properties. Having the option to customize your technologies to best fit the store is key. The results have been noticeable to everyone at Busy Beaver.

"The Badger team has done a great job of working with us in customizing things to suit our needs," states Gunnett. "They were able to work seamlessly with our digital price tag vendor to customize the tags so that they could be more easily read and let our scans be done in a timelier manner," added Gunnett. Another customization the Badger team facilitated for Busy Beaver was to funnel all the relevant information from the store's point-of-sale (POS) system directly into a dashboard that employees can access on a single tablet screen.

> ❝ Badger brings a lot of advantages to the retail industry, especially on the technology integration side. ❞
>
> **WILLIAM SANTIAGO**
> CEO, Badger Technologies

badger technologies

Making Technology Easy from the Beginning

"Our technology is very easy to set up in a store. All it requires is a 110 outlet and a space for the robot to have its docking station, and that's it. And then it's up and running," said Santiago.

The Badger robot can work with store systems in two ways. First, it can easily integrate with all retail POS systems to get real-time pricing data from the store at any time when evaluating shelves. Additionally, the robot can integrate into a "closed" system, which may be a computer-assisted ordering system or supply chain system.

The robot also is designed to be modular to keep things easy. Whether retailers want the robot to evaluate on-shelf availability, detect floor hazards or find product locations, all are possible. Badger Technologies' multipurpose, autonomous robots eliminate the need for separate robots or hardware, streamlining options for retailers while maximizing access to different functionality.

"What makes the Badger autonomous robot different than the competition or different than others is that we've built our technology to be very modular," explained Santiago. "When a retailer acquires our solution, they can pick and choose what they want to turn on." The team at Busy Beaver agreed.

"Badger was the ideal partner because it was a turnkey solution. The amount of work that had to be done by our team was very limited in comparison to what other vendors were asking for from us," said Gunnett.

Dramatic Improvements in Merchandising and Planogram Compliance

Busy Beaver's staff and management aren't the only ones to benefit from the robot's capabilities. The chain's corporate merchandising teams found some relief as well, helping them better manage today's turbulent landscape.

"This program has an immense benefit to our employees inside the store, but it has an even greater benefit to our employees in the merchandizing department who work in our headquarters," said Gunnett. "Our merchandising department is able to see planograms visualized without even having to step foot into the store."

The information that gets fed into real-time dashboards for the merchandising team allows them to proactively determine which aisles and shelves need restocking faster – keeping product availability a top priority.

badger
technologies

Introducing the New Member of Your Store Staff: The Badger Robot

For brands like Busy Beaver that have a laser focus on building a community and delivering exceptional customer service, in-store technologies like the Badger robot are enablers. While Badger robots have been in the international retail market for several years, customers and store members alike can be skeptical about new technologies. Busy Beaver introduced the robot to customers at the Delmont store's grand opening event, where the robot scanned one section of the store continuously to show off the technology in action.

"Our customers are responding really well to it," said Karen Mayer, a member of the marketing team at Busy Beaver. "Our customers understand the value of the fact that our team members can spend time with them. We've heard from a lot of people that's one of the reasons they come here and come back."

The newest staff member has gotten high marks. "The reaction from our employees has been very warm, inviting and thankful," said Michel. "Because they now can focus on what they were hired to do. They can work on being a salesperson, cashier, or handling inventory control versus going and looking for thousands of items throughout the store."

From a marketing and branding perspective, the Badger Technologies robot offers new value propositions to shoppers — and a touch of fun. Busy Beaver's marketing team has attached beaver faces to their robots to align the technology with the store and branding. Furthermore, they use videos and information about the robot on the brand's social media channels to educate customers.

"It's another way to connect with the customers and show them how we are using technology to improve their shopping experience," said Mayer. "We're going to host a contest on social media to name the Badger robot, which will be something fun for the customers to do."

The outcome is a win-win situation. "Badger Technologies makes an ideal partner for Busy Beaver because it lets us do what we say we do: put customers first," concluded Michel.

Visit badger-technologies.com to learn more.

badger technologies