

Smart robots, smarter logistics

DSL Logistics: Leading 3PL deploys Infios sortation robotics to tackle labor shortages, cut costs and scale multi-client fulfillment with speed and precision.



Snapshot

Company

DSL Logistics Limited (DSL), New Zealand

Industry

Third-Party Logistics (3PL)

Solution(s)

Autonomous Mobile Robots (AMRs), Sortation Automation

Complexity

Implement a flexible automation solution to address labor shortages, rising costs and growing customer expectations across multi-client 3PL operations.

Best practice

Infios's tabletop sortation robots deliver fast, scalable automation that integrates seamlessly with custom Warehouse Management System (WMS) environments while supporting diverse client requirements.



Background

DSL Logistics Limited (DSL) began business in 1986 as an Auckland based Customs Broker and has since grown into New Zealand's leading logistics provider for the clothing and footwear industries. The company has doubled in size over the past five years, having previously operated from six facilities on a single street while serving major sports and fashion brands.

The challenge

Attendance issues (with up to 30% of staff calling in sick on some days), rising wage costs and inconsistent performance levels were creating daily operational bottlenecks. At the same time, customer expectations—particularly in the e-commerce sector—kept rising.

“The motivation is to be better,” explains Aaron Hobbs, operations director at DSL. “We were struggling with attendance, reliability, and cost. Wage costs in New Zealand have increased significantly, and customer requirements are getting higher, especially within e-commerce. We wanted an automation solution that would work with staff to help us achieve our fulfillment goals to support a higher volume of orders.”

The challenge was two-fold: unlike single-client operations, DSL processes small batches for multiple brands, requiring the flexibility to handle high product variability. To meet the needs of the entire New Zealand market, the solution also needed to adapt to constantly evolving workflows and demand patterns across a diverse client base.



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Aaron Hobbs
Operations Director, DSL

The solution

Following a thorough review of automation solutions, DSL selected Infios to implement Libiao Robotics AutoSort Mobile solution. The system uses Autonomous Mobile Robots (AMRs) designed for tabletop sortation to occupy less space and provide faster deployment, reconfiguration and scalability.

The project launched in August 2024 before the approaching peak season, spanning approximately 200 square meters (sqm) within DSL’s expansive 12,000 sqm facility. Opting for a unified solution over distributed systems, DSL established a central automation hub and implemented shuttle trucks to transport inventory from the peripheral buildings for processing.

“We have five buildings on the same street,” says Hobbs. “Rather than deploying multiple sets of automation, we have two trucks that grab the inventory from our other facilities and shuttle it to the automation for processing. That allows us to have more deep storage solutions in the other facilities because we don’t have to process there—they just become storage and picking.”

A critical component of the solution was the seamless integration between the AutoSort Mobile platform and DSL’s bespoke Warehouse Management System (WMS). Infios worked closely with DSL’s internal development team to ensure the harmonious flow of data and operational systems. The integration was executed successfully, with minimal disruption to ongoing activities.

The tabletop sortation system significantly reduced manual handling. Associates no longer walk totes across the warehouse with multiple items to be sorted into different orders. Instead, staff simply places a single item into the robot, which autonomously delivers it to the appropriate stationary sorting location. This not only improves ergonomics but increases processing speed and accuracy.

Furthermore, DSL has leveraged the system’s adaptability for returns processing, managing mixed inward shipments and creating ratio packs (specific combinations of sizes) for

retail clients. The assembly of ratio packs tailored to individual retail clients demonstrates the platform’s versatility across warehouse functions.

The results

The implementation of Infios’s AutoSort Mobile solution has delivered measurable operational and strategic benefits for DSL:

- **30% efficiency improvement** in processing rates over previous manual sortation methods
- **Near-perfect accuracy**, with errors traced primarily to improper robot loading, rather than system performance
- **Faster recovery from staffing shortages**, reducing catch-up time from a week to a single day
- **New business wins** directly linked to automation capabilities
- **Improved hiring outcomes**, attracting higher-quality candidates interested in tech-forward roles
- **Simplified training process**, with new staff able to become productive within just five minutes of instruction

The system’s flexibility has been instrumental in supporting DSL’s complex multi-client model—today, approximately 40 brands are processed through one comprehensive automation solution, a testament to the platform’s alignment with DSL’s strategic expansion.

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In addition to operational metrics, the implementation of automation has yielded unforeseen advantages during peak periods. DSL successfully brought on students as temporary night shift associates and efficiently educated them on the system in a matter of minutes.

“It was extremely straightforward to train the students on the automation solution. They were able to begin working that same night after just a brief orientation. The system’s intuitive design makes it remarkably simple to train new users regardless of their prior experience,” Smith notes.

The future

The partnership with Infios continues to evolve, exploring additional automation opportunities to support DSL’s growth. With the successful implementation of AutoSort Mobile, DSL is in a strong position to expand these automation capabilities to other aspects of their operations.

“The fact that we pulled the trigger 18 months ago has put us a couple of years ahead of the competition,” says Hobbs. “The platforms are there now, we’re comfortable with it, and we’ve built the confidence and integration. We now have that desire to improve other areas.”