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Vera Bradley and FORTE Make Packing the Perfect Bag Faster Flexible Solution Increases Delivery Service Levels by 67% during Peak Period

February 23, 2011 - Mason, OH – FORTE, a leading distribution consulting and systems integration firm, and Vera Bradley (Vera), a specialty retailer of accessories, handbags and more, recently completed an expansion project to help the company successfully meet ecommerce and value-added service demands. In 2008, Vera had changed from having its ecommerce distribution handled by a Third Party Logistics provider (3PL) to controlling it in-house themselves. With the growing popularity of the brand, the 2009 ecommerce season created operational challenges. FORTE was then engaged to help Vera finalize and deploy a flexible and scalable solution to more effectively meet product demand for 2010.

“The expansion was a huge success,” said Dave Gealy, Director of Distribution for Vera Bradley, “We were able to process twice the amount of volume in about half the amount of time during the peak period as compared to last year and FORTE was a big part of getting us there. We value the solid, on-going partnership that we have with FORTE.”

The project led by FORTE involved process improvement, addition of sorters and other material handling equipment, as well as an upgrade of FORTE’s Warehouse Control System, Automation Director[®]. One of the benefits of the implemented solution, mainly due to the capabilities of Automation Director, allows Vera to be extremely flexible in processing. Vera can now reconfigure its order processing areas based on special promotions, order profiles, etc. down to a daily or even per shift basis as needed. The solution also helped increased throughput enough to enable Vera to process a new product release in less time.

“We’ve worked with Vera Bradley for several years now and their focus is always on the customer and continuous improvement, which makes distribution and supply chain initiatives critical.” states Bob Babel, FORTE’s VP of Engineering, “Our focus is on flexible and scalable solutions – we created an effective and successful solution for product demand with the Vera team and are proud to have them as a customer.”

About Vera Bradley

Friends Barbara Bradley Baekgaard and Patricia R. Miller founded Vera Bradley in 1982. Vera Bradley



accessories, handbags, travel and paper & gift items have recently been spotted on: Desperate Housewives, Brothers and Sisters, Entourage, Modern Family and in more than 20 feature-length films, as well as in celebrity gift lounges surrounding the 2010 Tony Awards, 2009 Daytime Emmys and 2009 Primetime Emmys. Today, Vera Bradley is sold through 3400 specialty stores, as well as 39 Vera Bradley stores nationwide. Visit www.verabradley.com to purchase or to locate a store near you.

About FORTE

FORTE (www.forte-industries.com) is a leading distribution consulting and systems integration firm based in Mason, Ohio. FORTE's supply chain expertise and services include network analysis and design, distribution facility and systems reconfiguration, process improvement and systems optimization, new automated facility development and WMS selection, implementation and integration. Contact Darcy Powell today for more information: dpowell@forte-industries.com or 513.204.3004.

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