



## Warehousing & Distribution Technology

### Inside:

Meet Joey **62**  
Pricing Tech **63**



Del Papa Distributing's new Texas City, Texas facility sits on 26.5 acres of land.

# New Warehouse? No Worries

Those who have recently made a move share their top tips on site selection and more. *By Jennifer Cirillo*

**M**oving homes can be stressful as can building a new one. There is a lot to consider and just as much that can go wrong throughout the whole process of selecting a new warehouse location, building that facility and then ensuring that operations run smoothly after completion.

In the fall of last year, Del Papa Distributing opened a new Texas City, Texas distribution center. The new distribution center sits on 26.5 acres of land and comprises three buildings, a 126,011-square-foot climate-controlled warehouse (with 66,000 square feet for expansion), a 31,255-square-foot office and a vehicle maintenance building for Del Papa's affiliate company T&S Fleet Services. Highlights include green elements such as high bay florescent lighting and cool roofing membrane, 24 docks in a cross docking configuration for efficient product flow, and ancillary space that serves as a main graphics center, which produces and distributes sign making

and marketing materials for retail displays. Del Papa Distributing worked with HDA Architects on the design of the office space, inspired by the Anheuser-Bush Brewery in St. Louis.

*Beverage World* asked both companies for their top tips on what to consider when building a new warehouse. Here's what they had to say.

### Jack Holleran, President, HDA Architects



**1. Truck Dock Location:** Plan the truck docks specific to the facility location. In cold climates, orient for full-year sun exposure to reduce snow and ice buildup on pavements. In hot climates, orient opposite sun exposure to reduce heat gain in loaded trucks and controlled-temperature warehouses.

**2. Materials:** Design with materials that have higher R-Values (which measure an insulation's ability to resist heat traveling through it; the higher the R value the better the thermal performance of the insulation) for greater insulation to reduce energy load. Design docks for energy efficiency, such as vertical style dock levelers that allow doors to close and seal against the dock pit.

**3. Optimal Ingress/Egress:** With increased needs for efficiency comes the need to adequately separate the car and truck traffic. The trend is toward providing two points of egress and wider, multiple driveways with vertical stacking to ensure the free flow of traffic.

**4. Fire Safety:** Investigate water pressures so it will accommodate Early Suppression Fast Response (ESFR) fire protection systems. No one wants in-rack sprinklers and an ESFR system eliminates this need and eliminates the requirement for numerous roof openings for skylight/smoke vents.

**5. Ground Inspection:** Obtain a soils investigation to evaluate the impact of site selection as it relates to soil removal and replacement with material trucked in, foundation and slab design, exterior pavement design, water table, rock elevation, soil swell potential, and winter vs. summer construction. In Minneapolis, the difference between two sites separated by a public street was \$750,000.

## Eric Joseph, VP, Logistics, Del Papa Distributing



**1. Site Location:** We wanted a site that allowed us to be more centrally located to our customers and suppliers. The infrastructure that surrounded the site was also very important. The visibility of our new facility has created some great marketing opportunities and has aided in our recruitment of new employees.

**2. Look Ahead:** You really have to look at where your company is headed in the next five to 10 years and not design based on today's needs. We sought input on the layout from many different resources and the information they provided was of value, but the most valuable input we received was from the people working out on the warehouse floor every day. Their feedback ultimately determined the final layout.

**3. Think Green:** The uses of motion detecting light fixtures and Rite Hite's big fans have helped us to reduce our energy needs for the warehouse.

**4. Spend Wisely:** To get the return on investment, the warehouse has to increase efficiencies and productivity. Providing a safe working environment should also be a top priority.

**5. Stay on Target:** Going into the project we had a clear vision of what we wanted and that didn't change very much during the project. We assembled a great team with HDA and Gamma Construction. We met on a regular basis to review the progress and discuss any potential changes. 🍷



Silver Eagle Distributors - Houston, Texas



"The distinct look of our new facility reflects the distinguished image of our brands. HDA was presented with a significant challenge and met that challenge in every aspect of the project."

Bob Boblitt Jr.  
Executive Vice President / CFO  
Silver Eagle Distributors



Jack Holleran  
President  
636.449.2450  
jholleran@hdai.com  
hdai.com

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