

CASE STUDY



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Improving Distribution

Casey's turns to Metalcraft for durable labels for use on returnable containers

A thin profit margin in the convenience store business puts extra pressure on inventory control, so individual [Casey's General Stores](#) hold no inventory. Instead, delivered items are placed directly on the shelf space. The publicly owned chain's nearly 2,000 stores place orders that are filled in weekly shipments across 14 Midwestern states from 600,000 square feet of distribution center space in Iowa and Indiana.

This just-in-time approach includes SKUs available as single items to reduce dollar amount inventory and retain freshness. The distribution centers use a voice picking system to fill reusable totes that are combined on pallets and loaded to semi-trailers that leave every 30 minutes, 24-hours a day, 6 days per week.

Each reusable tote is assigned to an order with a barcode scanner. When it's filled and ready to ship, tote pullers scan them again at the end of the line to make sure they get to the right pallet.

The trouble was that the labels on Casey's more than 150,000 tote inventory weren't sticking. "We were using just a standard label on each side of the tote that we could run through our printers and they weren't holding very well," said Bill Brauer, distribution center manager. "We didn't want to replace them all the time."

Fortunately, Brauer got a call from [Metalcraft](#) as recognized the need for a more robust label.

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**BILL
BRAUER**
- Casey's

Brauer worked with Metalcraft to select [Premium Polyester Bar Code Labels](#) for the reusable totes.

"Our best-case scenario would be to reuse a tote 26 times a year, and they last somewhere between three and five years," said Brauer. "The label will last as long as the tote."

The durable label is pliable enough to conform to curved surfaces. Subsurface printing keeps the bar code readable despite abrasion, and the adhesive holds against heat, cold and humidity as the totes travel to and from stores. Brauer's tote supplier even applies the labels for Casey's; he orders almost 15,000 totes per year to accommodate replacements and the company's growth.

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With Metalcraft's durable asset labels supporting his returnable container asset program, Brauer is looking at other ways to improve asset identification in Casey's warehouse information system as the company continues to grow.

For more information about using Metalcraft tags for your application, visit idplate.com or call 800-437-5283 or 641-423-9460.

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