CASE STUDY

BURSON AUTO PARTS

"THE CUBISCAN 325 HELPS TO POPULATE THE DATA TO MAKE BURSON EZYPARTS POSSIBLE"

Burson Auto Parts is Australia's trade specialist supplier of automotive aftermarket parts, accessories and workshop equipment. Boasting a highly successful 50 year history, Burson employs over 1,800 team members, and operates an extensive network of over 200 stores and 800 delivery vehicles. Recently, Burson has become the first Australian auto parts company to successfully expand into Asia.

According to Mark Gibson (Senior Project Manager – Operations, Burson Auto Parts), "Our emphasis is on continued store and product range expansion, together with a particular focus on delivering first-class service to our ever-growing trade customer base. We operate in a competitive environment, and continued success is based on our superior customer service, innovation and an extensive product range."

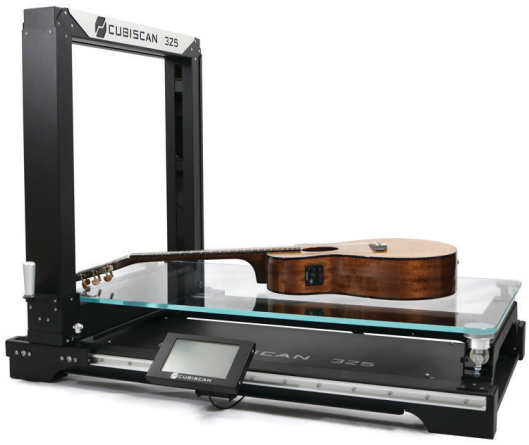
It was Burson's focus on innovation that prompted the company to invest in three CubiScan 325s. Two of these machines have been installed in Burson's state-of-the-art 50,000m2 distribution centre in Tullamarine, Melbourne. The other unit was installed at Burson's 8,000m2 facility in Willawong, Brisbane.

The Measure-Almost-Anything Solution

The CubiScan 325 is the universal measure-almost-anything solution. A static cubing system, it employs sophisticated, next-generation sensing and infrared technology to measure and weigh irregular-shaped parts, components and boxed items—including the irregularly-shaped car parts stocked by Burson.

As Gibson explains, there were a couple of business triggers that led to Burson's investment in a CubiScan. "Firstly, the dimensional accuracy and records we had for our products weren't all that robust. We needed a way to improve this data. One would normally expect suppliers to provide details around their products, but a number of our suppliers didn't have readily available, sophisticated data on product weight or size. So, Burson needed a way to gather this data accurately, reliable and in a timely manner," said Gibson.

"Importantly, we wanted technology that was easy-to-use, and made capturing all this data simple. We have over 150,000 SKUs across our range of products—that's a lot of data.



Can you cube a guitar with a Cubiscan 325? Yes, you can!

"We haven't been disappointed. From the time the CubiScan unit was installed, everything has been straightforward. You literally put the object in, place the head over the object, check that the dimensions have been captured, and confirm. It's a piece of cake—a really simple piece of gear to use. It's all been quite easy and seamless," said Gibson.

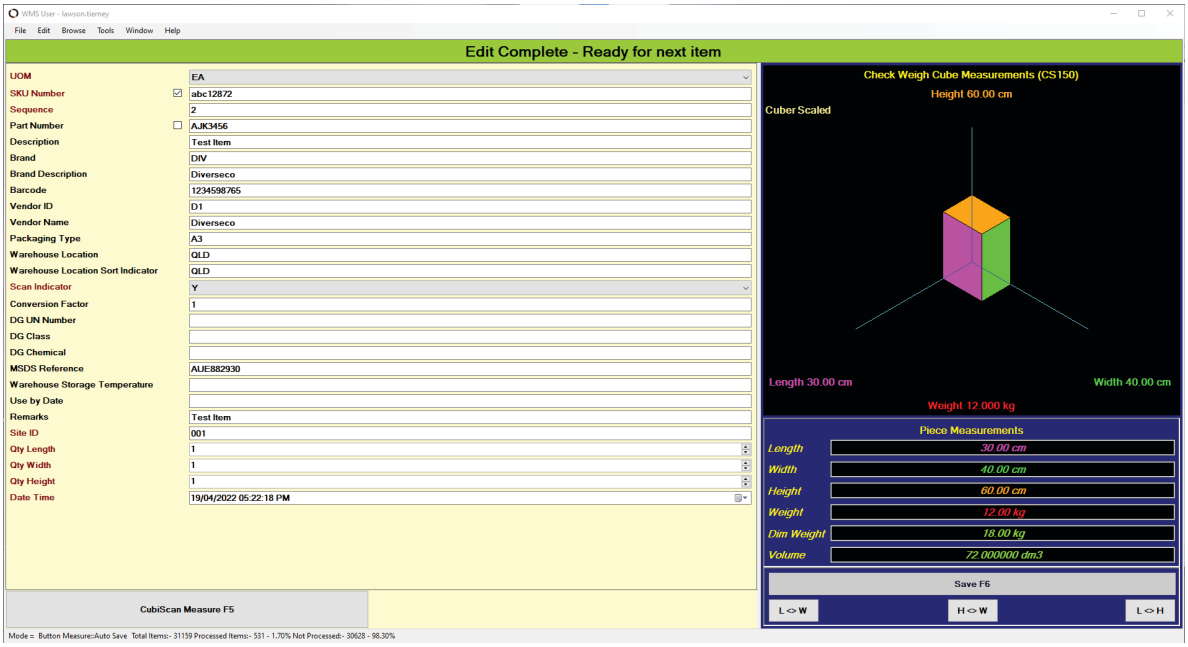
Powering New Warehouse Management and Goods-to-Person Ordering Systems

The second reason for Burson's investment in a CubiScan was linked to downstream automation in their warehouses.

"We've gone down the path of investing in a Warehouse Management System (WMS). This system relies on accurate volumetrics. We've also invested in the installation of a Goods-to-Person ordering system in our major warehouse in Melbourne—it went live last year—and we're planning on installing one in Brisbane as well. Having accurate weights and measures with which to populate these systems was essential," said Gibson.

Burson's Goods-to-Person ordering system was launched in December 2021: the new, web-enabled, simplified and speedy Burson EZYParts catalogue and ordering system for trade account customers. Burson EZYParts provides a broad view of parts availability, technical information and accurate repair time data to enable repairers to see the stock available at multiple Burson Auto Parts stores within their proximity.

Burson EZYParts also includes more detailed product information and product images covering the vast range of quality service and replacement parts in the Burson Auto Parts range. The system also easily allows for side-by-side parts comparisons before making purchasing decisions.



Sample CubeMaster Software User Screen. Up to 21 unique user-driven SKU validation fields are possible.

The CubiScan 325 helps to populate the data to make Burson EZYParts possible. Plus, with Burson having set targets for delivery timeframes of 30 minutes (or at the most within the hour) to its workshop customer base, accurate, timely data capture is essential.

"Our Goods-to-Person system relies on accurate volumetrics delivered by CubiScan. The Goods-to-Person apparatus is about 100m long x 12m high x 30m wide. Imagine that stocked with a whole series of plastic tubs—about 150,000 plastic tubs in total—if you don't have accurate data on the volumetrics of the SKUs going into those plastic tubs, the whole system breaks down," said Gibson.

Levelling Up with Special Features and Optional Extras

Burson's CubiScan 325 units were fitted onto heavy-duty, purpose-built trolleys and supplied with a rechargeable battery, portable power supply, handheld barcode scanner and label printers that enable full system use over an eight hour shift. This transforms the CubiScan into a completely mobile cubing, weighing and dimensioning machine. Burson's employees are able to take the mobile CubiScan to the SKUs, wherever they are in the distribution centre, rather than trying to lug heavy, awkwardly shaped SKUs to the CubiScan.

Along with the mobile trolley, Burson opted for the extra-large SKU feature. "We stock fairly large auto parts like brake drums and drive shafts, which tend to be both physically large and heavy. This made a compelling argument for the extra-large SKU option—our products just don't fit in a shoebox. So we needed a robust system that could easily cope with the dimensions of our stock. CubiScan delivers this," said Gibson.

Even with the extra-large SKU feature, the CubiScan 325 unit occupies very little floorspace; a key advantage in warehouses where space is at a premium. "The CubiScan is a compact piece of gear, which is great—it doesn't take up a lot of space in your operations. Ours is only about 1.5m x 1m in terms of its footprint. And it's robust. We stick the CubiScan out on the warehouse floor where there's dust and pieces of cardboard and God-knows what else—and nothing seems to bother it. We just have to make sure that the scanning plate is clean," said Gibson.

The CubiScan 325 also allows Burson to capture images of the SKUs. This functionality offers distinct benefits for both customers, and Burson's team members. "From a customer point of view, it is much easier if all your SKUs have photos displayed on your website. This makes it far easier for customers to confirm that it is the widget they're looking," said Gibson.

"From a warehouse picking view, image capture enables your employees to pick an SKU, call up the image on their RF scanner, and confirm that the SKU they're picking off the shelf matches. CubiScan helps reduce human error."

All the data collected by the CubiScan 325 is stored in a user-friendly, Windows-based PC that runs a configurable software program called CubeMaster. A flat screen monitor on a pivoting arm and a keypad are included in the ergonomic, easy-to-use system. Up to 20 unique user fields can be defined to record exceptionally detailed SKU data. This means that, in addition to the obvious fields of length, width, height and weight, the system can record data like barcode, part number, description, use-by date, Dangerous Goods class, and other custom information.

To learn more about how CubiScan 325 and CubeMaster can help you drive your business forward, contact Rhett Talley:
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Diverseco
Measurement & Automation

"There is no doubt that the CubiScan is helping us save time and improve our productivity. The data captured by the CubiScan is improving the ordering process for our customers, and making the picking process easier for our staff," said Gibson.

MARK GIBSON

SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

OPERATIONS

BURSON AUTO PARTS
THE PARTS PROFESSIONALS