

# UNEX CASE STUDY

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— Jason Lucas, Facility Warehouse Manager, Maletis Beverage



**customer: MALETIS BEVERAGE**

**operation: Wholesale Beer Distributor**

**goal: Organize beverage mini-kegs, kegs and cases for accessibility**

**solution: Span-Track systems from UNEX**



## Span-Track by UNEX Gets Kegs off the Ground and Gives Beer Distributor Room to Grow

**A thriving beer distributor now has an efficient and space-saving system for storing and moving mini-kegs, thanks to a customized Span-Track system from UNEX.**

With the beer business booming, workers at Maletis Beverage must manage hundreds of mini-kegs of domestic and imported beer that arrive each day at the distribution center in Portland, Oregon.

“We have 400 different types of beer in these kegs because there are so many microbreweries in the area,” says Jason Lucas, Facility Warehouse Manager. “In the past few years, we’ve picked up a couple of thousand SKUs, and our building isn’t getting any bigger.”

Historically, workers stored the 65-pound aluminum kegs on pallets on the ground. “Our space was almost maxed out,” says Jason. “And it was tough to find and retrieve the kegs on the pallets because they weren’t organized. It was a time-consuming mess.”

### An Idea Begins to Brew

Jason began to sketch an idea that would free up floor space and create a more efficient pick. He shared his concept with John Caselli, a distributor from NorthWest Handling Systems, and the plans were handed off to UNEX for development.



**Span-Track keg lanes were installed without pitch. The rollers assist the operators with picking/loading from either side of the rack.**





***“I had the idea; John had the toolbox – UNEX,” says Jason.***

UNEX in turn “gave us an excellent design, developed the customized roller tracks and delivered them fast,” says John. “Ultimately, Maletis Beverage was able to get hundreds of kegs off the ground and into a much more condensed area.”

**Let It Flow**

According to Chuck Doty, UNEX Director of Western Sales, UNEX manufactured 144 lanes of Heavy Duty Span-Track for Maletis Beverage. Each track holds 9 kegs deep of a specific brand, and the kegs can be loaded easily from the front or back of the lane. UNEX created side guards to keep the kegs steady.

“I’m able to put about 6 times more product in the same footprint because of the roller tracks, and that’s a huge benefit,” says Jason.

He adds that the new system has significantly reduced mispicks because every brand is so clearly tagged. And accuracy is critical to his company’s reputation. “If we get the wrong beer on the truck, we have to make a special run out to the account to make it right,” says Jason. “Accuracy builds trust with your customers and efficiency within your operation.”

**Ready for the Future**

Every week, new products arrive at Maletis Beverage for distribution. “Even in a difficult economy, the liquor business continues to do well,” says Jason. “Now, we have the space for whatever comes in next.”

The Span-Track system is working so well that Jason has placed an order to implement the same systems at the company’s Vancouver location.

“UNEX delivered a cutting edge design that is not overly built or overly complex,” says John. “This is just a great example of creative minds getting together to develop a helpful solution.”



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**A Maletis operator picks a 1/6 barrel keg from the rack and adds it to the outgoing shipment.**

