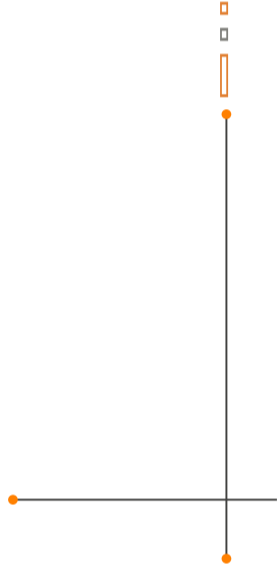


# **B**e **A**utomation **R**eady

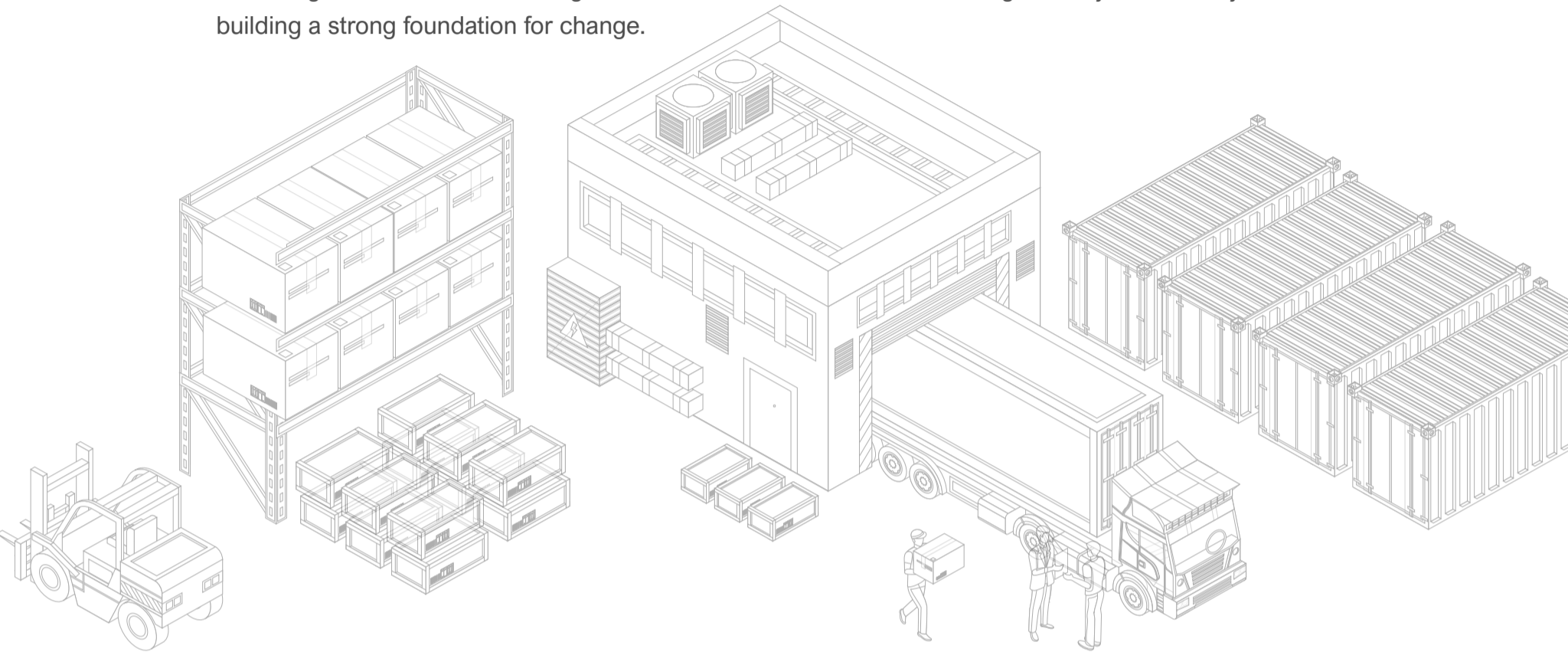
**PHASE 1**

## **EVALUATING MANUAL OPERATIONS**



## THE BAR IS OPEN: WHERE AUTOMATION GETS SERVED

This BAR (Be Automation Ready) series introduces a multi-phase framework for achieving warehouse automation and breaks down the transformation into digestible steps, focusing on practical solutions at each stage of automation. We begin with the fundamentals: understanding where you are today and building a strong foundation for change.



Before diving into new technology, it's essential to know where you stand. Phase 1 focuses on assessing manual operations to identify inefficiencies and opportunities for improvement. Key areas like picking, packing and order accuracy often reveal bottlenecks that hinder productivity and customer satisfaction. While 55% of fulfillment center spend is generally tied to order picking, every organization has a different profile. Focusing on the areas with the greatest potential ROI will create self-funding initiatives down the line.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF AN HONEST ASSESSMENT

### ***Inefficient workflows***

*Workers spend excessive time on repetitive or low-value tasks.*

### ***Order inaccuracies***

*Manual picking and packing leaves room for human error, which can lead to costly returns and lost customer trust.*

### ***Low productivity***

*Travel time, a lack of task prioritization and outdated processes slow down fulfillment.*

### ***Limited scalability***

*As order volumes grow, manual processes can become bottlenecks, hampering growth.*

However, these inefficiencies are opportunities in disguise. Understanding them helps build a clear case for automation and ensures that any changes align with your business goals.

# STEPS TO ASSESS MANUAL OPERATIONS

While there are many frameworks for assessment, the concepts tend to remain the same.

## 1 GAIN CLARITY ON PAIN POINTS AND BUSINESS NEEDS

Align on the most significant pain points. Talk to your warehouse teams — they are on the front lines and can offer invaluable insights into what works and what doesn't. Look for common complaints like:

*Delays due to inaccurate inventory counts*

*Difficulties in locating products quickly*

*Fatigue caused by excessive manual labor*

Some key areas for goal-setting include:

*Enhancing storage capacity and utilization*

*Reducing operating costs through efficiency*

*Improving SLA adherence to meet client commitments*

*Boosting operator productivity with ergonomic solutions*

## 2 MAP YOUR CURRENT PROCESSES

Create a detailed flowchart of your warehouse workflows, from receiving goods to shipping orders. Focus on tasks like:



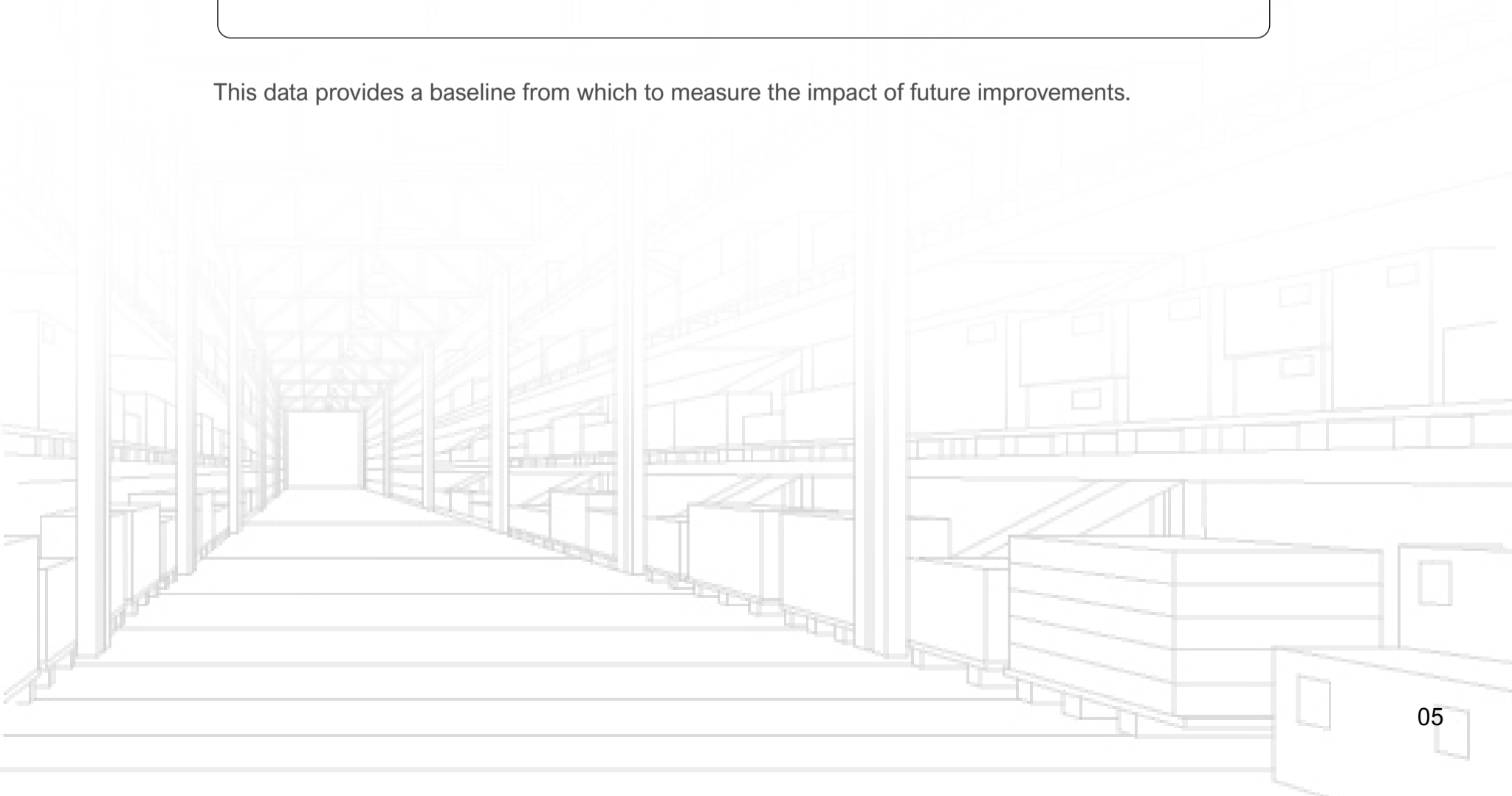
By visualizing these processes, you'll uncover inefficiencies, redundancies and dependencies.

## 3 GATHER PERFORMANCE DATA

Use key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure how your warehouse is currently performing:

<b>Order accuracy rates</b>	<i>What percentage of orders are fulfilled without errors?</i>
<b>Picking/packing times</b>	<i>How long does it take to fulfill a single order?</i>
<b>Labor utilization rates</b>	<i>Are tasks optimally allocated to workers?</i>
<b>Throughput</b>	<i>How many orders can your warehouse handle per hour or day?</i>

This data provides a baseline from which to measure the impact of future improvements.





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## CONDUCT TIME-AND-MOTION STUDIES

Observe workers performing key tasks like picking, packing and replenishment. Track how long it takes to complete each activity and note inefficiencies, such as:

*Excessive travel time between picking locations*

*Poorly organized inventory that slows down access*

*Repetitive tasks that could benefit from optimization*

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## EVALUATE YOUR TECHNOLOGY STACK

If your warehouse uses basic tools like spreadsheets or standalone systems, consider how they might limit visibility and decision-making. Look for gaps where an advanced Warehouse Execution System (WES) like GreyMatter could provide immediate improvements, such as task orchestration or inventory tracking.

**Is your warehouse ready to embark on this journey?**

*Contact us to learn how GreyOrange and GreyMatter can help you evaluate your operations and create a roadmap for success.*