

# Is Autostore the best choice for you?

**Is Autostore the best choice for you, or would it be better to keep looking for an alternative? To reach the right decision, first of all start by analyzing your process and then think about the secondary requirements that could play an important role. Dirk Becks explores the key considerations when it comes to Autostore.**

Despite having the same goal, similar concepts can sometimes differ in their suitability for a particular situation due to their design. It is important to conduct in-depth analysis of the advantages and disadvantages before deciding to invest. This article will help you get started.

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	Autostore	PowerCube	Attabotics	Intellistore
<b>Concept</b>	• Roaming on top & digging	• Roaming below & digging	• Roaming on top and below	• Pusher unit below • Transport and buffer on top
<b>Robot capacity (bins/hour)</b>	20-25	-	30-40	20-25 (per AMR-set)
<b>Storage bin</b>	• 600x400 mm • 3 heights • 30 kg	• 600x400 mm • 1 height • 50 kg	• 600x600 mm • 1 height • 50 kg	• 600x400 mm • Multi height • 30 kg
<b>Power system</b>	Lead-acid battery	Lithium-ion battery	Condensers - 'on the fly' charging	Lithium-ion battery
<b>Max. height (m)</b>	5.4	12	9	9
<b>Floor</b>	Extremely level	Level	Level	Level
<b>Unique characteristics</b>	• Proven concept	• Height 12 m • 2 bins simultaneously • No floor adjustment	• Bins individually retrievable • Speed • No floor adjustment	• Bins individually retrievable • No floor adjustment

Soft facts				
<b>Handling capacity</b>	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓
<b>Experience</b>	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓	✓
<b>Planning</b>	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
<b>Maintenance and service</b>	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
<b>FM Global 8:34 guidelines</b>	✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Storage density</b>	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
<b>Scalability</b>	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
<b>Construction requirements</b>	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
<b>Relative investment (subject to scale)</b>	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓

Source: Logistics consultancy firm Groenewout

Dirk Becks, senior consultant at logistics consultancy firm Groenewout, has compared various goods-to-person cube storage systems and summarized their main characteristics and pros and cons in the table below.

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## **Other aspects to consider**

The system characteristics are not the only determining factors. According to Becks, it is important to also take account of other aspects before making an investment decision, including:

### **[1] Fire prevention/fire insurance**

It will be necessary to comply with the FM 8:34 guidelines relating to fire prevention. There are various ways to do that, each with its own advantages, disadvantages and price tag. Besides the cost, arriving at a final solution can take up quite a lot of time and energy, according to Becks. The fires in the Ocado warehouses in the UK (in Andover in 2019 and in Erith in 2021) certainly haven't made it any easier to obtain a permit and fire insurance for cube storage systems. Projects sometimes come up against resistance from local authorities, leading to much lengthier procedures than anticipated. Therefore, try to involve all parties that have a say over the project's fire concept at an early stage: from the fire service and local government to insurance companies and certifying bodies.

### **[2] Not all buildings are suitable**

It is advisable to investigate the suitability of the building, especially in the case of existing buildings. It can often be necessary to update the existing sprinkler system, in which case that needs to be structurally possible. It may also be the case that more water must be available for extinguishing possible fires, requiring the installation of an extra – or a bigger – storage tank.

### **[3] Think about the pre- and post-processes**

The processes before and after the new system are just as important as the system itself. Becks: "Regardless of which concept you choose, the cube storage system is ultimately nothing more than a way of getting inventory to the operator efficiently. If you don't think carefully about the processes before and after the cube storage system, including the IT support, you will never get the maximum return on your investment."

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This article was published on [logistiek.nl](https://logistiek.nl) in February 2023. For more information, please contact [Dirk Becks](#).