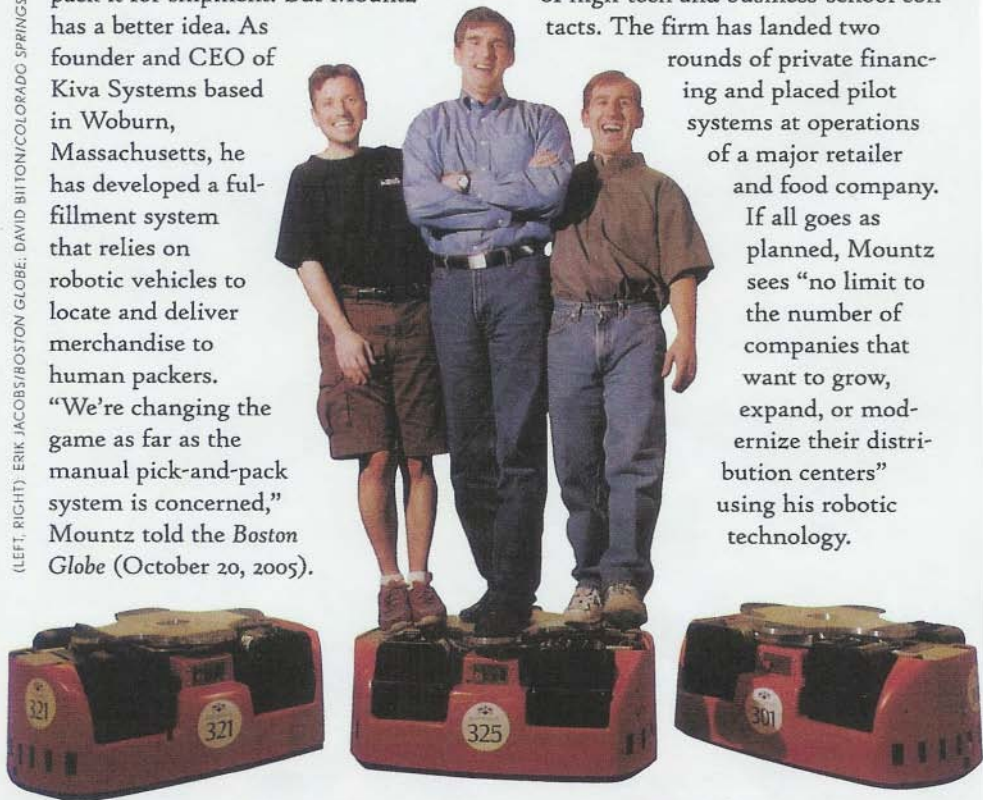


Robots to the Rescue

Order fulfillment will never be the same if **Mick Mountz (MBA '96)** has his way. Distribution centers typically rely on people to pluck merchandise from shelves or conveyor belts and pack it for shipment. But Mountz has a better idea. As founder and CEO of Kiva Systems based in Woburn, Massachusetts, he has developed a fulfillment system that relies on robotic vehicles to locate and deliver merchandise to human packers. "We're changing the game as far as the manual pick-and-pack system is concerned," Mountz told the *Boston Globe* (October 20, 2005).

An MIT graduate, Mountz launched Kiva Systems from his apartment in Palo Alto, California, in 2002, but he moved back to the Boston area two years later to tap into his network of high-tech and business-school contacts. The firm has landed two rounds of private financing and placed pilot systems at operations of a major retailer and food company. If all goes as planned, Mountz sees "no limit to the number of companies that want to grow, expand, or modernize their distribution centers" using his robotic technology.

(LEFT, RIGHT): ERIK JACOBSY/BOSTON GLOBE; DAVID BITTON/COLORADO SPRINGS GAZETTE



STANDING TALL: Mountz flanked by colleagues Raffaello D'Andrea (left) and Pete Wurman.

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