



Marchon

Better manageable order picking process thanks to shuttles

PROJECT

- Storage system with 30 shuttles
- 4 picking stations, 12 packing stations
- 300 order lines per station per hour
- Freed almost 2000 m2 of space
- Approximately 3 million glasses in stock

Michael van Es, chief operating officer of Marchon Eyewear:

“With this shuttle system we have freed almost 2000 square meters, which we now use to organize the rest of the operation more efficiently.”

From their distribution center in Amsterdam, Marchon Eyewear supplies frames and sunglasses to opticians and eyeglass shops across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Because the existing distribution center became too small, the company decided to install a new storage and order picking system. Thirty shuttles, divided into three aisles, now deliver the bins, which contain approximately three million glasses, to the order pickers. Chief operating officer Michael van Es: “During busy times, I can now scale up without having to deploy as many people as I had to before.”

From their distribution center in Amsterdam, Marchon supplies frames and sunglasses to opticians, large spectacle chains and distributors throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA). The, from origin, American company has a lot of success with glasses which are, under the license of top brands like Calvin Klein, Nike, G-Star and Karl Lagerfeld, designed, produced and distributed.

Because of the success, Marchon reached the limits of the possibilities in the existing distribution center.

Automation of the process provided opportunities to use the available square meters more efficiently. In addition, the existing process of picking carts and barcode scanners resulted in too many errors and the costs were too high. “We could not ascertain what glasses were sent to the customer in

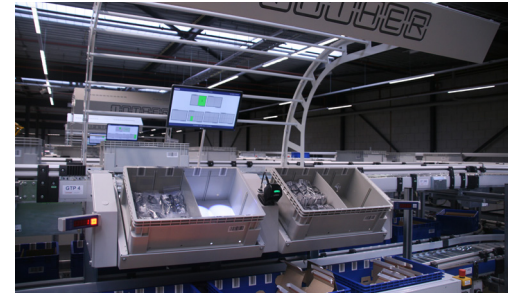




which box, let alone who had picked and packed the glasses,” says Michael van Es, chief operating officer of Marchon in EMEA.

Thirty shuttles

Marchon started the search for a new warehouse and picking system four years ago.



The choice was made to go for a shuttle system with three aisles with ten shuttles per aisle (thirty in total) which was supplied by Inther. “A shuttle system is the best fit within the contours of our premises. If so desired, we can have a fourth aisle with another ten shuttles placed next to it,” knows Van Es.

When Marchon receives an order, the shuttles will bring the correct bins to one of the four picking stations in the adjacent hall. At each station there is an employee who can pick out of two bins simultaneously. A screen above the station indicates how many pieces he/she should pick out of which bin, while a light beam designates the designated box. The picked glasses are then placed in a blue order container, which in turn contains one or more shipping boxes. Two rows of red and green LED lights mark the position of the box in which the glasses are placed.

Value added logistics

Four months after commissioning, Marchon is particularly pleased with the new storage and order picking system, which should provide a productivity of 300 order lines per person per hour. Van Es indicates that they are close to that number. He now also expects to be able to respond better to fluctuations in workload. “During busy times, we have one and a half times as many orders as usual. In the old situation we needed one and a half times as many people in order to cope with this increase. We can now scale up without having to use so many extra people.”

Freed space

Marchon can start looking at the future again with the renewed operation. Thanks to the new system, an area of 2000 square meters has been freed, which is now used to organize the rest of the operation more efficiently. In addition, productivity has increased, while there is space to expand the storage capacity with a fourth aisle. If, in the future, picking capacity turns out to be inadequate, there is also the possibility of switching from one to two shifts.

The COO of Marchon is more than satisfied of the role that Inther played. “It is a nice group of people who listen well to what we do and do not want. Different than any other system integrator, they gave us the feeling that we will realize this project together.”

SUMMARY

- Warehouse of 5000 m², divided in three halls
- Range of 30.000 SKU's, consisting out of 10.000 active articles
- Average order size: two glasses per order
- 1000 to 2000 returns per day
- Shuttle system with 3 aisles and 30 shuttles
- Room for expansion with a fourth aisle and 10 extra shuttles
- Four order picking stations with light and LED pointers
- Pick to light lane for cases
- Twelve packing tables with a discharge path to expedition



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