



Fresh
thoughts
on more efficient
operations

The Belgian groceries business Colruyt and its subsidiary Dolmen IP chose Cimcorp's MultiPick system to secure its logistics chain.



CUSTOMER: Colruyt, Belgium's second biggest retail chain

SPECIAL FEATURES: Colruyt is always the cheapest for the consumer, and the quality and freshness of the products are high

CHALLENGE: ensuring the efficiency and reliability of the central warehouse

The Belgian retail chain Colruyt is a long-standing family business, which treats the consumer in a cost-conscious way. Cutting-edge logistics, no-frills stores and a range of thousands of products under continuous price monitoring guarantee that at Colruyt the consumer gets the lowest price on the market for each product.

The manager in charge of distribution, Johan Van Den Bossche, says that the MultiPick system suits Colruyt's requirements.

"It's important to us that the number of picking errors remains low and that operations are economical and efficient."

Subsidiary Dolmen IP knows the field

Colruyt's wholly-owned subsidiary Dolmen Industrial Projects (Dolmen IP) is a systems integrator, with the task of supplying its partners with systems automation, sorting and transportation systems.

Dolmen IP implemented the order picking system for Colruyt based on Cimcorp's MultiPick concept. Taking the requirements into consideration, the concept proved a competitive option. To ensure project implementation, Cimcorp carried out an extensive series of test runs with the various types of crate that are used over and over in Colruyt's distribution system. There are 18 different models of returnable crates in total. The crates differ from each other in many ways. However, they all have the same footprint of 600 mm x 400 mm.

Dolmen IP tailored the six-robot MultiPick system supplied by Cimcorp to suit Col-



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► ruyt’s specific requirements. In fact Dolmen IP has specialized in the implementation of overall control systems. In this case, close collaboration with Colruyt was an excellent base for a successful project.

Challenges for logistics

There are almost 200 Colruyt stores. The day-to-day challenges of cheaper prices and fresh produce are great. In particular, the high quality and low price of fresh vegetables, fruit and meat are a matter of pride for Colruyt.

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The MultiPick system plays its part in ensuring that the Colruyt Red Price guarantee works optimally with regard to the quality and availability of the products. Red Price is a discount system developed by Colruyt. Colruyt monitors the competition and listens to the consumer.

“If someone sells a product more cheaply than Colruyt, Colruyt will react immediately and cut the price of the product in its own shops so that our price is the lowest on the market,” says Van Den Bossche.

MultiPick’s contribution

The MultiPick system supplied to Colruyt’s central warehouse at Halle handles between 35 000-50 000 crates of fresh produce a day. The system copes with the simultaneous handling and management of the tens of thousands of plastic crates as it responds to orders received directly from the stores.

“Colruyt stores keep their stock levels at a minimum,” explains Van Den Bossche.

The central warehouse operations are both economical and efficient.

“Where we needed the contribution of 35 people before, MultiPick has enabled us to reduce the number of employees down to five with the same volume as earlier,” says Van Den Bossche.

Colruyt – the consumer’s friend

Colruyt saves in other ways too: the company has its own coffee roasting house, its own meat processing centre and its own wine bottling plant. All of this shortens the logistics chain.

Colruyt’s message to the consumer according to Johan Van Den Bossche is always the same: we are the cheapest. Fulfilling that promise is difficult, but it has always been achieved and according to Van Den Bossche it always will be. Cimcorp and the MultiPick system have also played their part in keeping this promise and rising to the challenge.

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