



CASE STUDY

DOUBLE REFRESHMENT FOR BREWING GIANT ANHEUSER-BUSCH INBEV GROUP

THANKS TO LFS WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND INTEGRATED LYDIA™ VOICE PICKING THE BREWER OPTIMISES ITS PICKING OPERATIONS.

At Spaten-Löwenbräu GmbH in Dachau, Germany, high season begins in April and ends with the traditional Oktoberfest in Munich – an absolute sales peak. The only way the beverage wholesaler can manage this highly seasonal business and prepare temporary staff for physically demanding beverage handling every year is if it has a well-placed logistics organisation running in the background.

Faced with an increasing volume of orders, Spaten-Löwenbräu decided to automate the processes within its logistics operation. From the outset, the goals of the transformation were clearly defined: more transparency, better stock management and flexible use of seasonal workers.

The brewery giant was able to fix two big challenges at the same time by employing two highly complementary

solutions from a single supplier. The first was a new feature-packed, modular Warehouse Management System (LFS) by EPG, one of the most powerful systems in the world, which can be used across all industries. LFS can be adapted and customised to the requirements of the most diverse of industries and ensures efficient management and control of logistics processes.

By choosing LFS, the brewer was at the same time able to optimise its picking operations by switching to Pick by Voice with EPG's market-leading LYDIA™ Voice. As well as being a globally successful independent product in its own right, LYDIA™ Voice slots together seamlessly with LFS.

Spaten-Löwenbräu GmbH is part of the Anheuser-Busch InBev Group, the world's leading brewery group with annual sales volumes of 433 million hectolitres of beer.



CHALLENGE

- Lack of logistics transparency
- Inefficient stock management and handling
- Uncertain preparation and use of temporary workers at seasonal peaks



SOLUTION

- Flexible, customised WMS solution
- Cutting-edge reporting, data analytics and easy-to-use interface
- Ergonomic, hands-free, eyes-free voice picking package
- Multiple languages to suit globally-sourced employees
- No training required, seasonal workers can start straightaway



RESULTS

- Safer and more refined warehouse processes
- Internal movement of kegs safer and less strenuous for workers
- New temporary staff fully productive from Day One
- Time and cost of staff training slashed to zero
- Seasonal peaks handled more smoothly and predictably

With an annual volume of around nine million hectolitres, the company ranks second in the German beer market. Half of Spaten-Löwenbräu's customer groups are food-service operations, and the other half are commercial customers, including filling stations, beverage shops and canteens. The supply lines to a total of 1,800 customers have to be intact at all times. For this purpose, the beverage wholesaler keeps a variety of items permanently in stock and has the option of ordering and managing order items on request. The accelerating pace through the season made automating the logistics processes in the 15,000-m² warehouse in Dachau – and providing more stock transparency in the process – an obvious step. Managers chose LFS because, with its industry-specific software module, the system meets all the specifications of the beverage trade. It offers outstanding reporting capability and data analytics options, backed by an easy-use interface. With a voice-picking solution also necessary, the easy integration with EPG's LYDIA™ Voice was a clear bonus.

TWO PICKING AREAS FOR GREATER EFFICIENCY

The versatility and flexibility of LFS allow for safer and more refined warehouse processes. Customisable highlights include: multi-order handling with up to nine different order processing strategies, empties management, kitting and de-kitting capability, serial number handling, returns management and outstanding logistics support applications.

Spaten-Löwenbräu's warehouse consists of two separate picking areas: one for keg picking and one for assembling cash-and-carry items such as cases and six-packs. Both areas are shown separately in LFS, with orders containing items from both product groups split accordingly. Orders are picked in parallel, and then, prior to loading, the items in each order are recombined in a consolidation area for joint delivery. This separation of the heavy and cumbersome kegs from the easier-lift products simplifies the entire process for employees. This way, the double-mast lift trucks used in the keg area can also do their work without posing a danger to the order pickers.

DEPENDABLY CUSHIONING SEASONAL PEAKS WITH LYDIA

Spaten-Löwenbräu relies on additional warehouse staff during the peak seasons. This flexibility also has to be reflected in the software systems used, because long and costly orientation is out of the question. LYDIA™ Voice is speaker-independent, so employees with this PbV solution don't have to go through voice training and can be immediately productive. The beverage wholesaler currently uses the voice system in German and English. At the request of Spaten-Löwenbräu GmbH, Romanian is currently being implemented as an additional language.

The other advantage of LYDIA™ Voice is obvious: handling kegs and cases can be physically very strenuous – and dealing with lists or MDE devices makes the entire process even more complicated and slower. With LYDIA™ Voice, employees benefit from the high ergonomics of the solution.

Thanks to the hands-free-eyes-free concept, order pickers can concentrate fully on their work, and this makes them much more productive. Employees at Spaten-Löwenbräu also have the choice of working with the Voxter® mobile voice computer and headset, or using the ergonomic LYDIA™ VoiceWear®, which is a vest with a built-in speaker and microphone.

Spaten-Löwenbräu intends to continue teaming up with EPG in the future: With such positive experience, the high reliability of the system and the already noticeable boost in productivity in order picking, further projects are already in planning. The virtual Timesquare control station, for instance, provides the company with exact information at a glance about the trend in KPIs.

ABOUT SPATEN LÖWENBRÄU

- Part of Anheuser-Busch InBev Group, the world's leading brewery group
- Spaten-Löwenbräu ranks second in the German beer market, with 9 million hectolitres of beer sold
- Customer base comprises food service operations (50%) and commercial customers, including filling stations and beverage retailers (50%)
- High season begins in April and ends with Munich's Oktoberfest



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