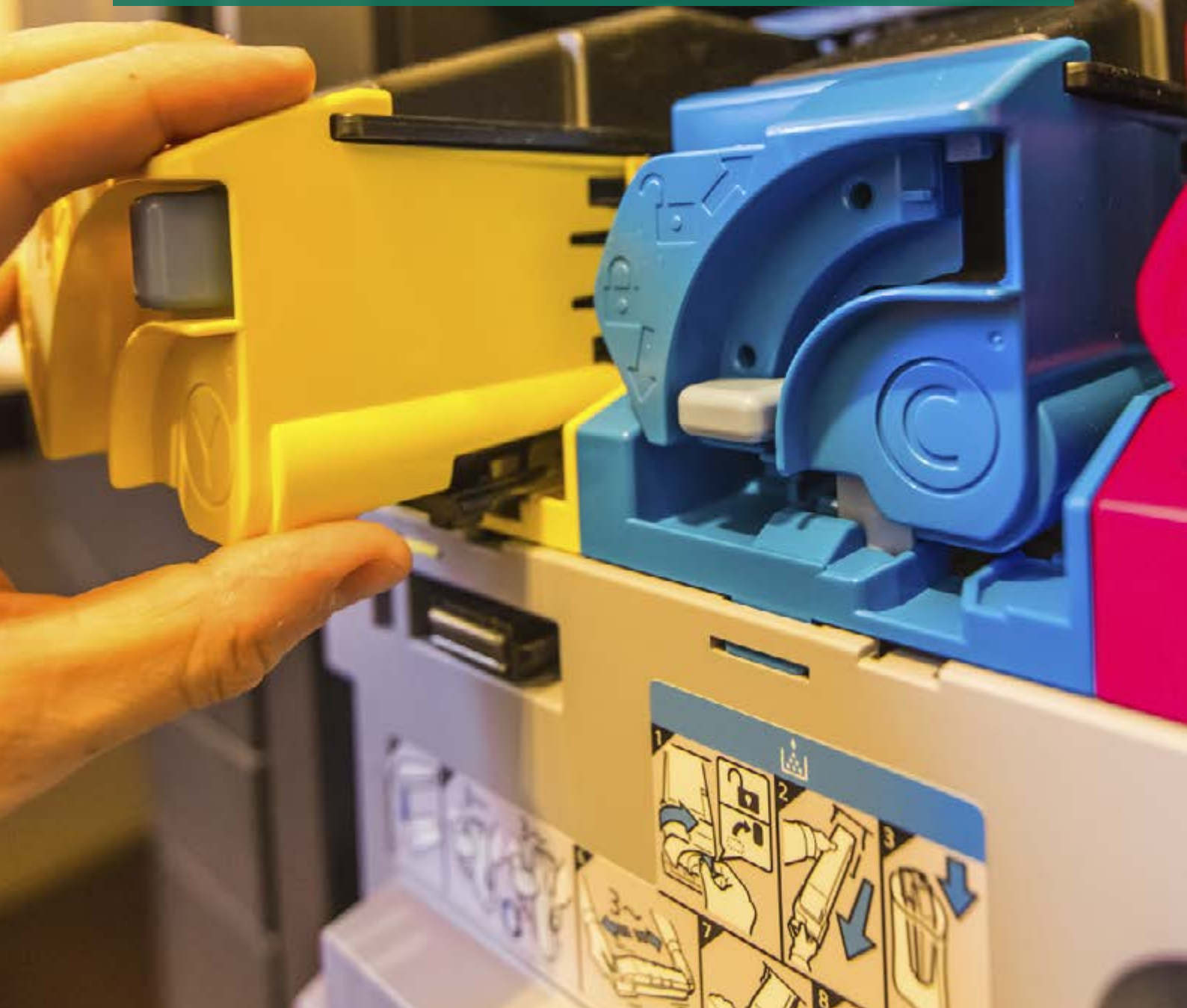


SUCCESS-STORY EPG | LFS

EPG | LFS COORDINATES WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT AT UFP

Warehouse Management by EPG





3D, laser and inkjet printers – there are now more than 70,000 printing devices on the market. And demand is high. An estimated 55 million printer and around 8 million toner cartridges are sold each year in the Germany, and those figures are going up. As a specialist for printer and copier accessories, UFP Deutschland GmbH has its finger on the pulse, offering a 24-hour delivery service and a comprehensive range of services for their customers. Highly efficient logistics processes are a must when you have around 6,500 items available for immediate delivery and send in the region of 30,000 packages a month.



With an eye on the future, the company has optimized its warehouse management and has integrated the EPG | LFS warehouse management system from EPG into its central warehouse in Kamp-Lintfort near Düsseldorf. The result – UFP is benefiting from a 20 percent increase in picking performance, great transparency in the warehouse and shorter delivery times for customers.

MODERN WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR MULTI-CHANNEL DISTRIBUTION

UFP Deutschland has been owned by the French UFP Group (the Union Française de Papeterie) since 1997. As an expert for printer suppliers and storage media, the company advises and supplies around 1,200 customers within Germany. The company is unusual because of its complex customer structure and multi-channel sales model. “We serve 40 major customers, as well as a large number of retailers, medium-sized and small companies that buy low and very low quantities”, says Adriaan Zwaneveld, Director of Sales & Logistics. “Our warehouse and process workflows are correspondingly varied and complex.” The company stocks 3D printers, paper, toner and cartridges, as well as storage media and other accessories, across 11,000 m² of warehouse space.

“Supplier and customer requirements have been constantly increasing in recent years”, says Zwaneveld. “Our old warehouse management system and paper-based picking were no longer flexible enough.” The customer therefore chose EPG | LFS, as a warehouse management system with a large number of features and a modular structure that can be adapted to different requirements. It was clear from the start what the printer and print accessories supplier needed. The complex processes need to be mapped by a single system – including all upstream and downstream processes.



SINCE 1997
MEMBER OF THE
UFP GROUP

MORE THAN
700 EMPLOYEES
IN THE GROUP

SALES VOLUME
OF MORE THAN
800 MILLION EUROS

“We are very happy with EPG | LFS and have recommended the system to our colleagues in Spain.”

Adriaan Zwaneveld,
Director of Sales & Logistics, UFP Deutschland

COMPLEX LOGISTICS REQUIREMENTS



Besides the varied customer structure, the large number of products mean there are certain handling issues as well. Toners and printer cartridges have use-by dates, for example. A separate picking process is also necessary when picking security items – which are very high-value items, such as expensive storage media. All items also have specific packing guidelines to be followed for shipping. Sensitive inkjet cartridges, for example, must not be packed with other heavy items, such as toner, and paper often has to be sent completely separately. “Our employees in the warehouse really had to know our customer’s requirements and the requirements for the products . Paper-based picking meant that it took a very long time before new employees were productive”, says Zwaneveld. Integrating the warehouse management system means human resources are employed significantly more efficiently without long training periods. Employees now use PDC devices for picking in the warehouse, instead of paper lists. All the important data about customers and packing requirements is saved on the system and displayed on the PDC device right in the warehouse. In the past, for example, warehouse specialists often had to check the text on the product packaging against the order data to make sure the right product was picked. Now, a quick scan is all it takes to complete the same check. UFP has significantly reduced the number of errors as a result. Route-optimized control and multi-order picking mean that pickers can process outstanding orders significantly more quickly as well.

SERIAL NUMBER SCANNING

FOR REPORTING AND TO IDENTIFY ITEMS



The portable data collection devices are also critical to the future viability of the company. Many major printer manufacturers, such as Lexmark and HP, expect retailers to keep complete documentation of the points of sale of any product. They therefore increasingly require all the serial numbers of sold items to be reported per delivery address. UFP simply could not provide the data with the old warehouse management system and paper-based picking. EPG | LFS now supports various ways to scan serial numbers. Instead of scanning individual items, outer packages with several serial numbers can be recorded with a single scan. This saves time, especially if when retrieving large quantities and not individual items.

“We were really excited about how flexible the system is. Our pickers use the EAN number to identify orders of small items and scan the item’s serial number as soon as it is retrieved. We have to process orders for wholesalers a bit differently, as we are then sending whole pallets”, explains Adriaan Zwaneveld. “In our pallet warehouse, the picker only has to scan the serial number when the pallet has been taken off the forklift truck and put down for pallet shipping”.

CONTINUOUS STOCKTAKING AND DYNAMIC BIN ASSIGNMENT

EPG | LFS also has major benefits when it comes to half-yearly and annual stocktaking. The new system gives the printer and print accessories supplier a transparent overview of all current stock levels at all times with a continuous inventory. Every item movement is documented by EPG | LFS and an accurate inventory is kept for all bin locations. As the supplier stocks items with very different dimensions, it is also very important that the system for managing and holding stock is flexible. EPG | LFS therefore uses system-managed dynamic field assignment to assign bins and either adds variants to an existing bin location or to a new bin location. “Additional bin segmentation of the shelving racks has allowed us to optimize utilization of the existing storage space. EPG | LFS also takes into account the different item sizes from tiny USB sticks to large printer toner cartridges”, explains David Emmel, Logistics Consultant at EPG.



PICK & PACK

FOR ORDERS OF SMALL ITEMS

The retail and small customer segment is a particularly challenging sales channel at UFP. To get orders to the customer within 24 hours, the picking procedure has been redesigned to increase efficiency. Instead of processing each order on its own, several orders are processed at the same time with multi-order picking. Pick-and-pack picking means that orders that typically consist of very small items can be packed directly from the bin location to the shipping container without intermediate stations. EPG | LFS also instructs the picker to load the right shipping materials onto the picking cart before the picker has even started the picking run. Pickers then pack the single items directly into the shipping box as they pick. EPG | LFS uses the item's master data to calculate the size of the shipping container, the size of the item and the weight of the order before the process starts. The system tells the picker exactly how to pack the items and whether items need to be packed separately.

Once the job is complete, there is now another process step UFP does not need. "In the past, we had control processes with cameras in place to make sure that the right items were getting to the customer. Now that EPG | LFS scans the EAN codes and does accurate weight control, it's no longer an issue. We are only still using cameras for pallet shipments to our wholesale customers", explains Zwaneveld. If the final weight does not match the calculations of the system for the picked order, EPG | LFS instructs employees to carry out a manual check.





FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE

Optimizing warehouse management with EPG | LFS is crucial for the future success of UFP Deutschland. The Group is in a fast-moving industry and must therefore constantly adapt to changing conditions and new developments on the market. “We are very happy with EPG | LFS and have recommended the system to our colleagues in Spain,” says Zwaneveld. “We are going to look at the potential for voice-controlled picking next. We want to find out whether a voice solution could have further potential for optimization.”

COMPANY PROFILE

EPG – Smarter Connected Logistics

EPG is one of the leading international providers of comprehensive Supply Chain Execution Suite (SES) and employs 700 people at 19 locations worldwide. The company supplies its more than 1,500 customers with WMS, WCS, WFM, TMS and voice solutions to optimise logistics processes – from manual to fully automated logistics environments. EPG solutions

cover the entire supply chain, from warehouse and road to ground and cargo handling solutions at airports. EPG’s comprehensive portfolio of solutions is complemented by logistics consulting, cloud services and managed services, as well as logistics training courses at the company’s own academy.



EPG IN NUMBERS


★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **MORE THAN 1,500 CUSTOMERS**
 ON ALL CONTINENTS WORLDWIDE


700
EMPLOYEES AT 19 LOCATIONS WORLDWIDE

OUR SOLUTIONS ARE AVAILABLE IN **50+ LANGUAGES**


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FASTEST GROWING AND SECOND LARGEST VOICE SOLUTION IN THE WORLD

30+ YEARS LOGISTICS EXPERIENCE



SUPPLY CHAIN EXECUTION SUITE
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TOP 5 WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS WORLDWIDE



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