



BEST PRACTICE

CEWE

—→ Pouch sorter in
omni-channel distribution

ORDER SORTATION FOR SEVERAL PRODUCTION LINES



POUCH SORTER IN OMNI-CHANNEL DISTRIBUTION

CEWE is Europe's leading company for photo services. With the brand's well-known products such as the CEWE photo book as well as wall art, calendars, photo prints and a variety of photo gifts, the company offers a wide range of high-quality products. Especially in the pre-Christmas season, the order volume is extremely high. In order for CEWE to be able to fulfil its ambitious delivery promise, shipping must not only be efficient, but highly reliable.

At the CEWE Foundation's headquarters in Oldenburg, which is also the largest production site, not only its own products are manufactured; merchandise arriving from 14 sister companies are handled there as well. The products are delivered to end customers and more than 20 000 retail partners in 21 European countries. In addition, the other locations are also supplied with articles from Oldenburg.

To enable further growth and increase efficiency and quality in this business unit, the automation and optimisation of the shipping process was an essential factor. There was great potential for improvement particularly with multi-item orders, which are provided for despatch with a time delay from the different, decoupled production areas or from sister companies.

To reach these goals, psb intralogistics has implemented a dynamic pouch sorter, where the articles are first buffered and then consolidated according to order. The intralogistics solution also comprises a flat-pack goods conveyor system that connects the packing/consolidation area with the outbound goods area.

INFORMATION + VIDEO ON OUR WEBSITE



CUSTOMER

CEWE Stiftung & Co. KGaA
Oldenburg | GER

SYSTEM

Pouch sorter system with 15,000 pouches, dynamic buffer for up to 13,440 pouches, 3-stage matrix sorter, 8 feed stations, 10 packing stations

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↓ Eight manual pouch loading stations





↑ Best possible utilisation of the available space:
dynamic pouch buffer above the sorting steps

At eight loading stations, the pouches are each filled with one article from the multi-item orders. In addition, up to 4 000 packed single-item orders per hour are routed directly from these stations to the outbound goods area via flat-pack goods conveyor technology. The advantage of this procedure is that the in-house flow of goods is identical and therefore efficient, regardless of whether end customers, trading partners or sister companies are supplied or if single or multi-item orders are processed.

The individual articles of the multi-item orders arrive with a delay at despatch from the different production areas. As soon as all articles for an order are available in the dynamic pouch buffer, the pouches are batch-wise called out of the eight buffer carousels.

The batches of 512 pouches then pass through a three-step matrix sortation. Thanks to that sorter the different products of a single order are brought together easily and automatically. Pre-buffers and post buffers enhance the sorting performance

and allow for the optimum selection of the unloading and packing stations.

The intelligent system routes up to 2 500 pouches, or order positions per hour in the requested sequence to one of ten packing stations. In this way, each end customer only receives one parcel, even though several products have been ordered, some of them from different company locations. The procedure is similar for the assigned retail partners and sister companies.

With its outstanding versatility, the pouch sorter fully exploits another of its strengths in this project. It enables the best possible utilisation of the available space, also in terms of height, as the solution for CEWE had to be realised in an existing building which so far had also been used for the despatch operations. Despite the low height in the building, the psb overhead conveyor technology allowed for the system to be installed on two levels in a space-saving manner. The individual system modules have been arranged to optimise the material flow: workstations and sorting steps on the building floor, the large pouch buffer directly above.

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