

Dexion drives efficiency in apparel industry through automated distribution systems



Fast fashion is on the rise, triggering global demand for quicker and more efficient logistics and distribution operations within the apparel industry. Leading storage and materials handling specialist, Dexion is meeting this demand by delivering automated warehousing solutions.

Client Director, Colin Yeo explained how the revolutionary warehouse system can meet the needs of an extremely dynamic industry.

“Typically, apparel distribution centres service hundreds of fashion retailers and handle up to 50,000 cartons per day, shipping millions of garments each week to outlets and end consumers,” Mr Yeo said.

“Automated warehousing offers a distribution solution with significant advantages in terms of economies of scale, increased productivity and rapid responsiveness to market demands.”

The automated warehouse system directly eliminates much of the traditional manual handling associated with garment handling and its preparation for order fulfilment. As an example, Quality Control Operators simply take the incoming cartons off the conveyor

system in the receiving area, identify and check them, then buffer them in the fully automated carton warehouse.

The individual cartons are stored and retrieved by highly dynamic mini-load stacker cranes, capable of handling cartons of various dimensions in a multi-deep environment, while providing easy access and maintaining stock integrity.

“This method achieves significant cost reduction for the user by the very nature of its operation. The automated warehouse enables and facilitates rapid picking, sorting, and shipping at the time it is required,” Mr Yeo explained.

Warehouse performance is increased through automation by reducing the labour requirement and higher storage density. Depending on the business’ individual requirements, there are broadly three order fulfilment solutions available within an automated warehouse:

- **Solution One: Zone Route Picking**
Picking occurs with order cartons being diverted into target zones
- **Solution Two: Cross Docking and Goods-To-Person**
Combines a cross-docking system for fast-moving items and a highly dynamic goods-to-person picking solution
- **Solution Three: Automated Sorter Picker**
Picking orders by a high-speed sorted solution for the entire SKU range, capable of handling up to 35,000 items per hour

It is easy to integrate value-add services into the automated process by simply integrating workstations into the flow. Orders that require reworking are automatically redirected to the workstation in order to receive labelling, promotional items, individual packaging or other special services. These orders are then reintegrated into the main material flow and conveyed to the despatch area for shipping.

The system even works for special e-commerce demands, which are typically small order volumes requiring fast turnaround times. Integrating e-commerce functions with store replenishment activities ensures both operations have access to shared stockholding locations, thereby increasing efficiency and eliminating storage duplication.

Tailored to each business’ individual needs, Dexion’s automated solutions deliver the highest distribution centre performance, highest picking and inventory accuracy, a significant reduction in operational costs and a rapid return on investment.

Through Dexion’s tailored solutions, the logistical prerequisites are established for the growing and evolving fashion industry.

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