Digital logistics gallops towards omnichannel

Harcour optimizes the organization of 1,200 SKUs of equestrian products and reduces the time dedicated to managing goods receipt by 65%.

Country: **France** | Sector: **textiles & fashion accessories**

HARCOUR

CHALLENGES

- Facilitate **control over goods** received in the warehouse.
- **Minimise errors** in order preparation and dispatch.
- **Speed up the work** of operators in the facility.

SOLUTION

- Easy WMS **warehouse management** software from Mecalux.

BENEFITS

- **65% reduction** in the time used to identify and store items.
- Preparation and dispatch of **400 omnichannel orders** a day during the Black Friday campaign.
- Efficient **goods slotting** strategy to optimise the work of operators.

Harcour is a French sportswear brand specializing in equestrian fashion. The business designs and markets three collections a year: two ready-to-wear (summer/winter) and another for horseback riders. Made from high-quality materials, its apparel and accessories stand out for their creativity, innovation, and elegance. Harcour became the official supplier of the French equestrian team in 2017 and of the Swiss team in 2021.

» **Founded in: 2015**
» **Employees: 25**
» **Presence: France** and over **25 countries worldwide (especially in Europe, the US, Asia** and **Australia).**
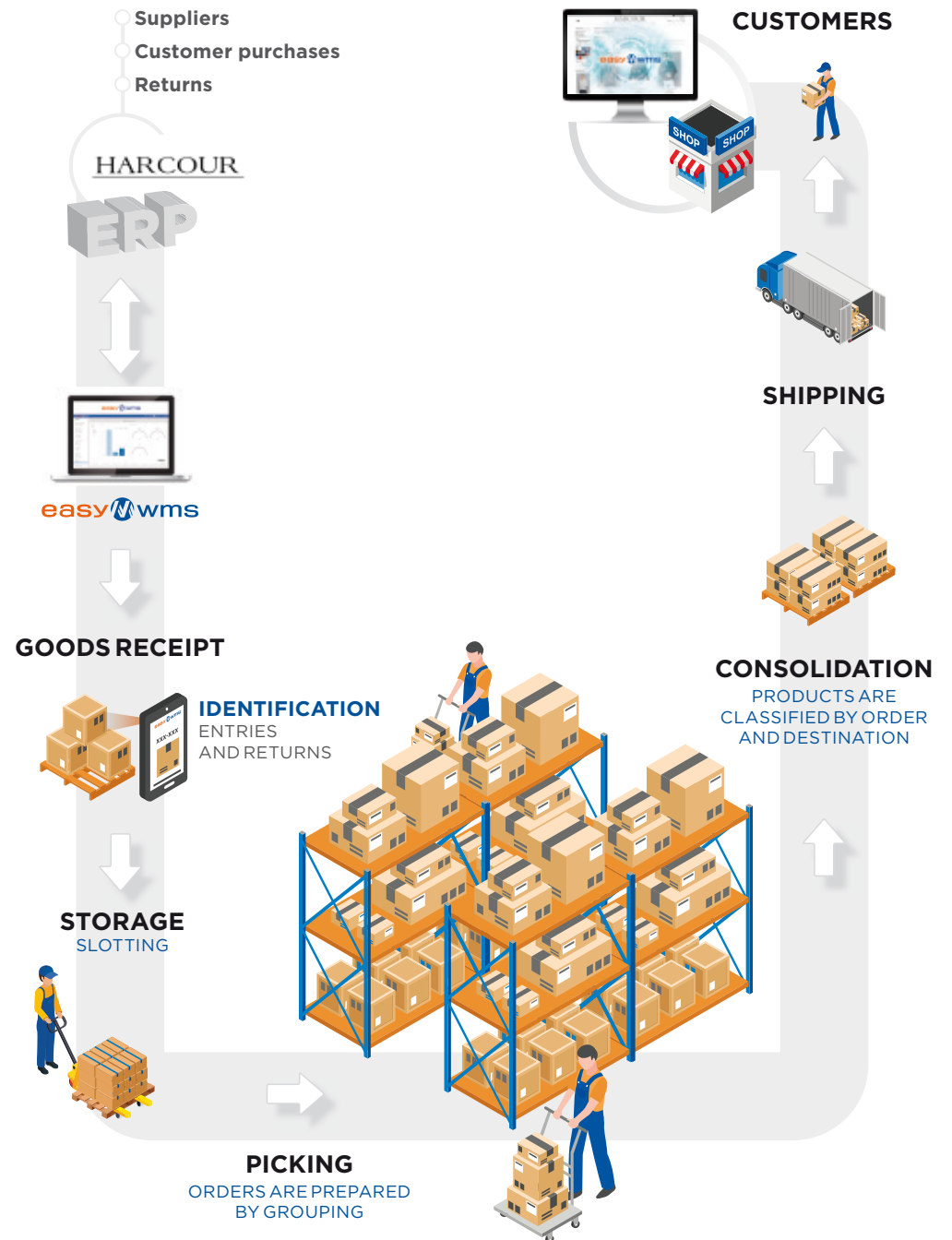
Easy WMS connected to Sage ERP

The Easy WMS warehouse management system has been integrated with Harcour's Sage ERP software to ensure proper management of the goods in the facility. The two systems continuously transfer data on, e.g., orders to be prepared and those that have been dispatched.

Communication between the ERP system and Easy WMS is fundamental for improving Harcour's logistics efficiency. The ERP system creates and maintains the new product database, generates invoices, and notifies the warehouse of orders placed by customers. Easy WMS, on the other hand, informs the Sage software of the products received (to verify that no mistakes have been made) and of the orders dispatched.

How do you adapt logistics operations to cope with rising online sales? French equestrian fashion retailer knows the answer: by ensuring tight control over goods and logistics processes. Harcour's wide-ranging product catalog includes pants and vests as well as items for horses (blinders, blankets, and tendon protectors). To optimize its supply chain, the company has equipped itself with technology capable of improving both stock management and omnichannel order fulfillment.

Harcour has a 7,535 ft^2 warehouse in the French town of Savigné-l'Evêque. Over the

years, it has renovated this facility, adapting it to market changes. The daily pace of work at the warehouse is intense. It manages three collections a year: one permanent, featuring equestrian sportswear, and two seasonal — summer and winter — with informal apparel.

Harcour's business is omnichannel, i.e., the company offers its customers two different sales and communication channels. The retailer's products can be purchased via its website (www.harcour.com), in one of its four proprietary stores in France, or in any other equestrian fashion store that carries the brand. From a logistics point of view, omni-

Suppliers
Customer purchases
Returns

HARCOUR
ERP

easy wms

GOODS RECEIPT

IDENTIFICATION
ENTRIES AND RETURNS

STORAGE
SLOTTING

PICKING
ORDERS ARE PREPARED BY GROUPING

CUSTOMERS

SHIPPING

CONSOLIDATION
PRODUCTS ARE CLASSIFIED BY ORDER AND DESTINATION

channel strategies demand a high number of internal movements in the warehouse. This is because orders tend to consist of a multitude of SKUs with extremely diverse destinations.

"When we first opened the facility, we didn't use a specialized IT tool to organize our logistics operations. We would make a note of the items we received and the orders we prepared and dispatched in an Excel," says Warehouse Manager Mickaël Jolly.

However, as the business expanded and the number of SKUs and orders rose, manual organization of the goods became less and less effective. "We knew that, to serve our customers satisfactorily, we had to improve operations in our facility and ramp up operator productivity," says Jolly.

After comparing several solutions, the company decided on Easy WMS warehouse management software from Mecalux. "We were convinced it was the system that would best meet our needs. Plus, we really liked the training we received from the technical team," says Jolly.

Advantages of digital logistics

Easy WMS has streamlined warehouse operations and made them safer. It has achieved this by sending operators instructions on how to complete any task. The operators receive instructions on their RF scanners on which location to go to, which items to remove from the racks, and in what quantity. "By following the directions from the software step by step, we've minimized the risk of making mistakes," says Jolly.

The most obvious improvement in the Harcour warehouse following the deployment of Easy WMS lies in product slotting. Before, operators would group the products belonging to the same collection and SKU in a specific area in the facility. Now, Easy WMS identifies the items received and assigns them a location based on their size and

color. Proper organization of the 1,200 SKUs has had a positive impact on order picking. "We've experienced a real improvement in order prep times. We normally ship around 60 orders a day made up of about 20 lines each. During our Black Friday campaign last year, we were able to finish up to 400 orders in a single day. Without Easy WMS, it would have been impossible to prepare so many orders," says Jolly.

Likewise, thanks to the new distribution of goods, operators no longer have to travel around the warehouse to prepare orders; instead, they work exclusively in the zone assigned to them. "We've increased the quality of work life of our operators, which was one of our priorities," says Jolly. Each operator specializes in certain types of products and only picks similarly sized items.

Orders are prepared by grouping; that is, operators pick items belonging to several orders on a single run. These goods are subsequently sent to the consolidation area, where they are sorted by order and destination (e.g., whether they are for online customers or Harcour stores). With this way of working, the company has gained in speed and safety.

Besides order fulfillment, another operation that has been optimized by Easy WMS is goods receipt. Previously, it could take operators as long as seven hours to identify the products one by one as they arrived at the facility. "With Easy WMS, we've cut the time we spend on identifying and storing merchandise by 65%," says Jolly.

Products arrive at the warehouse properly identified with a tag. The operators merely have to read the barcode with their RF scanners, and Easy WMS verifies that the correct items have been received. Then, it assigns them a location.

The Harcour facility also manages returns. In this case, the operators identify the items

with their RF scanners, and Easy WMS tells them what to do with these goods in line with the company's returns policy.

Successful omnichannel logistics

Easy WMS has enabled Harcour to boost its omnichannel business. The integration of the software in the warehouse has markedly improved the performance of operations such as goods receipt and order preparation. "The operators have really gotten used to the software — it's made their work a lot easier," says Jolly.

"Easy WMS has given us a new, optimal way of working that's tailored to the characteristics of our business," says Jolly. The Mecalux software has enabled Harcour to shorten the time devoted to managing goods receipts by 65%. At the same time, the WMS has provided Harcour with flexibility and logistics scalability that can be adapted to new needs, such as the unexpected increase in orders seen during the Black Friday campaign.

> "Since implementing Easy WMS, we've seen a dramatic change in our warehouse operations, especially in receiving and order picking. During our Black Friday campaign last year, we were able to finish up to 400 orders in a single day. Without Easy WMS, it would have been impossible to prepare so many orders."

Mickaël Jolly
Warehouse Manager

With Easy WMS, Harcour has reduced the time spent on managing goods receipt in its warehouse by 65%