

Traceability of food at three temperatures

Buying group LT Distribution Europe has installed Easy WMS warehouse management software from Mecalux to control the traceability of 6,000 SKUs in real time.

Country: **France** | Sector: **food & beverage**



Centrale d'achat alimentaire

CHALLENGES

- Accurately monitor a wide **variety of goods** belonging to different customers.
- **Optimise** warehouse **operations**, particularly putaway and order picking.
- Ensure **safe** product **storage**.

SOLUTIONS

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

BENEFITS

- Full **traceability** of 6,000 SKUs of different characteristics and turnovers.
- **Agility** in order picking and dispatch.
- Storage of goods in a **flexible, versatile** system running at three temperatures.

LT Distribution Europe is a French buying group specializing in food. Its extensive product catalog includes all kinds of seasonal fruit and vegetables, meat, and fish for supermarkets, butchers, greengrocers, and restaurants. The company's main priority is twofold: to offer quality products at the best price and provide its customers with efficient service.

» **No. of SKUs: 6,000**

» **Total storage space: 3.7 acres**

» **No. of employees: 20**

LT Distribution Europe is a group purchasing organization that began when a number of French retailers specializing in the food sector joined forces. The company purchases, stores, and distributes the products of the businesses that make up the group. Since it was founded in 2021, the organization has been committed to digitizing its logistics operations: "We're convinced that our supply chain needs to be optimized to meet the needs of our customers," says Nabil Loutfy, General Manager of LT Distribution Europe.

The company has a 3.7-acre logistics center in Criquebeuf-sur-Sein, France, that operates at three temperatures. Food is kept in ideal conditions to preserve its properties, whether at an ambient, refrigerated, or frozen temperature. LT Distribution Europe houses products of various sizes, turnovers, and characteristics in the Mecalux storage systems.

To commission its first warehouse, LT Distribution Europe knew operations had to be as efficient as possible. "Our company is immersed in a major growth process, and to successfully cope with it, we have to strictly control the traceability of our products stored at varying temperatures. With such a large number of items from different customers, we needed a system that would organize all operations in the logistics center and manage the 6,000 SKUs more efficiently," says Loutfy.

The company decided to equip its logistics center with Easy WMS warehouse management software from Mecalux. This program ensures tight stock control, enabling LT Distribution Europe to know the status of its inventory in real time. To achieve this, Easy WMS simply identifies each item as it arrives at the facility.



"We chose Easy WMS because it's an advanced software program that increases the productivity of warehouse operations. It organizes all processes, from goods receipt to dispatch. Easy WMS also gives us strict control of the products and total traceability."

Nabil Loutfy

General Manager, LT Distribution Europe

Advanced logistics activity

To communicate with Easy WMS, operators use RF scanners. These devices provide the employees with instructions on how to complete their tasks (e.g., where to slot the goods or how many items to remove from a location to complete an order). "By following instructions from the system, operators work much faster and without making mistakes," says Loutfy.

In addition to controlling product traceability, Easy WMS also organizes, supervises, and optimizes all operations in the logistics center, from the receipt of the items to order distribution:

Goods receipt. Every day, the warehouse receives hundreds of pallets sent by the suppliers of the different companies that make up the group. Operators identify each pallet

simply by reading the barcode with their RF scanners. Easy WMS then assigns the pallets a location taking into account variables such as product type, SKU, required temperature, and turnover. Thus, for instance, high-turnover products are placed closer to the loading docks to streamline goods inflows and outflows.

Product storage. After receiving and identifying the items, the operators move the goods to the location assigned to them by Easy WMS. The software tells them which coordinates to go to, creating the route with the minimum distance to travel. It also shows them the exact location to store the pallets in. "Easy WMS organizes replenishment. When a location is about to become empty, the software generates a replenishment order so that we can purchase more product from our suppliers," says Loutfy. Thanks to the proper

organization of its storage and replenishment tasks, the company always has all the items it needs to avoid interruptions to service.

Perpetual inventory and traceability.

Easy WMS takes inventory in real time by automatically tracking product entries and exits. Perpetual inventory is especially helpful in LT Distribution Europe’s warehouse, as it has a large number of SKUs. The company’s logistics managers have permanent access to all stock-related information, for example, the quantity of goods stored in each location. The software also makes it possible to monitor the stages a product has gone through from the time it enters the facility until it leaves.

Order picking. Every day, the LT Distribution Europe warehouse prepares orders that are sent to the facilities of companies affiliated with the buying group and to the different points of sale. Operators walk up and down the warehouse aisles, picking products directly from the shelves. They can put together several orders on a single run. “With the instructions from Easy WMS, our operators prepare a large number of orders flawlessly and in a very short time,” says Loutfy. Items that are part of the same order are grouped on pallets and stretch wrapped, labeled, and deposited at the docks, where they wait to be loaded onto trucks.

Cross-docking. Part of LT Distribution Europe’s orders are cross-docked. This operation consists of distributing goods ordered by customers without having to first store them. As operators identify items in the

receiving area, Easy WMS tells them whether to slot them or to send them directly to the dispatch zone.

With Easy WMS, LT Distribution Europe has a logistics center with modern, controlled operations. By correctly managing its goods, the purchasing group can efficiently serve the needs of the food retailers that make up the organization.

Complete traceability of food

For a company that manages food like LT Distribution Europe, keeping goods in ideal conditions and controlling traceability are top priorities. The Easy WMS software enables the company to monitor the stages the products move through up to distribution, control risks, and ensure the quality of processes.

“We satisfy the needs of the wide variety of companies that belong to our business group. To that end, we’ve made sure our logistics operations are well organized and agile and that we have tight control of all SKUs,” says Loutfy. Easy WMS is a scalable system capable of adapting to changes in LT Distribution Europe’s warehouse, i.e., the rising number of SKUs and orders.

With its clear commitment to digitization, LT Distribution Europe has a versatile supply chain to fulfill the needs of all the companies in the group and their customers. The software provides real-time information on the different operations being performed, enabling logistics managers to make strategic improvement decisions to boost business.



The proper organization of the goods has impacted all warehouse operations, including the work of the operators and stock management