

Fashion giant, Petrol Industries, Optimizes the Picking Process with the Skorpio X3 Mobile Computer from Datalogic

Overview

Originally a belt manufacturer from the Netherlands, Petrol Industries decided to expand ten years ago with affordable, rugged men's and children's clothing for the mid-range segment. The gamble paid off and this company has been very successful. Petrol Industries now has 2,700 outlets throughout Europe with an annual growth rate of around 30%. "The key to our success is mainly our strong name, our customer orientation, and the fashion itself, which appeals to many people and provides good value," stated managing director Elwin Flint.

The Challenge

The rapid growth rate of Petrol Industries had a strong impact on the company's logistics. The old warehouse became too small, so additional warehousing space had to be rented. "Partly as a result, processes were often badly organized and chaotic. Redundant handling and administration frequently occurred and it was difficult to keep track of everything," Flint explains. "It became high time to overhaul our logistics systems." After moving into the new head office and the 8,000 m² European distribution center in Tilburg, Petrol Industries did just that.

"Logistics processes are far more automated here," mentioned Sander Bruring, product manager at Petrol Industries. "In the past, we didn't have location numbers and we worked with paper picking lists. We could not maintain an overview of the process and we lacked good data on picking performance. We also didn't have any real time information. All data had to be entered manually. At peak times, the operation would take two employees a half day to perform. Naturally, this increased the chance of data entry errors, forming a potential problem for our delivery reliability. By automating the order picking process further, we were able to solve many issues at once."

The Solution

Petrol Industries hired ItSuitsIT, supplier of special software solutions for the fashion industry to provide the software. For the hardware, ITSuitsIT suggested using Datalogic's partner, ICS Vertex, which supplied Petrol Industries with Skorpio™ X3 mobile computers for picking operations. These elements provided the basis for a completely automated picking system that was implemented in about a month.

ItSuitsIT's ERP system forwards all the picking instructions for work orders to the ICS ScanSuite middleware, with which the Skorpio X3 mobile computers communicate directly. To pick the order, the operator simply logs into the mobile computer system, selects one of the orders from the list shown on the display and starts picking. For maximum efficiency and time savings, the Skorpio X3 device guides the operator to the pick locations and registers operations at top speed. The mobile computer also comes with an "on hold" option that allows the current order to be temporarily paused so the operator can switch between orders or workflows when necessary. Once the order has been picked, the items are packed and prepared for shipment with a shipping label printed by the Skorpio X3 device. All the information about the specific order is relayed to the ERP system and stored.

The Results

After only a few weeks, Bruring and Flint saw excellent results, making them very satisfied with their choice. "The price/quality ratio was one of the key reasons for choosing the Skorpion X3 mobile computer," Flint indicated. "But its proven track record in the market also convinced us that these devices were the best choice for our requirements; we saw this with our own eyes after using the solution."

The Skorpion X3 mobile computer is very user-friendly and intuitive in day-to-day use, which saves much time. Bruring specified, "we often work with temporary workers, and at peak times, the number of these workers increases by around 50%. It is essential that they can learn to use the Skorpion X3 mobile computer quickly with very little explanation. We have found that new employees can work with this device almost immediately. The large display showing the ideal route for our order pickers and Datalogic's patented 'Green Spot' technology for instant visual good read feedback have been two very important factors in helping our workers learn to use the device quickly and reduce picking times."

Datalogic's easy to use Skorpion X3 mobile computer, together with ICS Vertex's management tool and ItSuitsIT's software proved to be a winning combination for Petrol Industries. Picking performance increased by approximately 20% in the first two months of use, while invoices and packing slips are now generated automatically with no errors. The company also receives more information about picking status and the performance of individual workers. "With this solution, we can keep track of operations and take measures, if necessary. It allows us to constantly optimize our logistics processes," concluded Flint.

Customer: Petrol Industries

Industry: Retail/Specialty Retail

Application: Order picking

Country: The Netherlands

Datalogic Product: Skorpion X3

Datalogic Partner: ICS Vertex - Amsterdam