CASE STUDY | LOGISTICS

Ordered today – delivered tomorrow

Reliably preventing disruptions in logistics centres

Our customer:
A leading online mail order company

Fashion, shoes and cosmetics – these product categories generate a double-digit billion turnover per year for one of Europe's largest online mail order companies. The latter operates several large logistics centres in Europe, where the ordered goods are picked and delivered to the customers without delay wherever possible.

Online platforms offer customers a wide choice along with a tailored shopping experience. Digitalisation, availability, customer service and sustainability are the main topics the online mail order company is currently focusing on.

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The challenge:

Online trade has experienced an enormous boom in recent years, not least due to the global pandemic. Compared to high street retail it has significantly expanded its market share. One of the key expectations consumers have is very fast and reliable shipment, with delivery within a maximum of 24 hours as standard. To achieve this, high availability is a basic requirement that certainly not only applies to the online shop, but also to the entire logistics chain. Therefore, errors and unplanned plant downtimes in the logistics process must be avoided at all costs.

One reason why the system requirements for logistics centres are so extremely high is because in many industries 70 % of the turnover is achieved during the so-called peak weeks. These include, for example, "Black Friday" or the Christmas period. While reliability is certainly key for the system availability, the fact that maintenance and repair work can be carried out very quickly further enhances it. Accordingly, it was a damaged shaft in a line sorter that initially went undetected which essentially triggered the project. The resulting unplanned standstill of the 60-metre-long and 3-metre-high system meant that no more goods could be transported to the picking stations. As a consequence of this unplanned standstill, customers were dissatisfied and this led to sales losses.

The solution – why ifm?

In order to ensure reliable operation of all processes without unforeseen system downtimes, the online mail order company opted for a condition monitoring solution. When searching for the right system, the company was given a recommendation from a market-leading OEM to use ifm solutions. For the purpose of implementing a condition monitoring system on the line sorter, vibration sensors were installed on the bearings and motors of the belts as well as on the belt sprockets. The sensor signals are now transmitted to corresponding evaluation units for vibration monitoring. Evaluation, monitoring and visualisation are carried out via the moneo RTM module of ifm's digitalisation platform. This means that maintenance needs are quickly detected and the upcoming work can be carried out before a plant downtime occurs. The possibilities to easily implement additional software add-ons as well as the simple operation and good connectivity were crucial and decisive criteria for the customer to rely on moneo.

Results:

- Plant downtimes are reliably avoided
- Condition-based maintenance
- Easy installation and operation
- Thanks to IO-Link technology, additional modules are easy to integrate

Reliable operation of the systems

Constant product availability

Quick and easy installation and maintenance

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