

# ONE STOP SHOP

Automating a sorting center requires smart concepts from a single source



The OptiSorter Split-Tray is ideally designed to sort items up to 5kg (11 lb)

International e-commerce poses enormous challenges for courier and parcel services. Distribution centers are groaning under rising volumes of parcels, tighter delivery timescales and the ever-expanding variety of products. On top of this, there are seasonal peaks in demand. Efficient and flexible solutions to improve processes are a must in the sorting center and so, too, is a single-source partner who understands how to tailor and implement such solutions.

Böwe Systec, based in Augsburg, Germany, is a customer-focused, one-stop shop for letter and parcel logistics that has been developing and producing automation technology for over 70 years. Operating globally, in recent years it has invested in research and development in areas such as sorting, where it is launching the OptiSorter Split-Tray, warehouse management systems and RFID technologies.

“As a one-stop shop, we are positioning ourselves as our customers’ single point of contact for all their letter and parcel logistics requirements,” says Joachim Koschier, managing director of Böwe Systec. “They should be able to source everything they need to optimize their parcel sorting center and internal processes from us – from the feeding technology to the sorting system and solutions for automated goods out.”

**Planning is the key** The know-how that Böwe Systec has built up across a range of industries helps it to analyze customer

processes precisely. Exactly the right level of automation needs to be identified for each customer. “This is often a bit of a balancing act,” explains Albert Hendriks, head of the parcel sorting business unit at Böwe Systec. “Internal processes need to be configured with enough flexibility to be able to respond at short notice to unforeseen consumer demand. Incorporating additional workstations on the sorter that can be manned by extra staff when needed can help take the strain. Automation does not necessarily mean cutting staff as much as possible, but rather their clever deployment in other places to contribute to further efficiency increases.”

Böwe Systec sorting solutions help achieve this through their simplicity and flexibility. Modular concepts ensure the machines are tailored to operational requirements and the automation process itself can be undertaken gradually.

**Flexible solution** The OptiSorter is at the heart of many such flexible, comprehensive solutions. Whether in its carousel, vertical, horizontal or dogleg variants, or as a multilevel solution, the modular design of this Böwe Systec parcel sorter means that it can be tailored to suit any situation and upgraded at any time.

Böwe Systec parcel sorting systems offer fully automatic sorting. Their Push-Tray sorting technology gives the OptiSorter an enormous bandwidth beyond the limits of other types of sorter, and enables heavy,

## KEY FACTS

- Böwe Systec provides sorting solutions for letters, flats, packets and parcels
- The OptiSorter Horizontal has a maximum speed of 3.6ft/s; the Vertical can achieve 4.9ft/s

round or oddly shaped items to be processed rapidly. Böwe Systec has now added the OptiSorter Split-Tray and Double Split-Tray to its portfolio. This new solution is ideally suited to the high-throughput automatic sorting of items up to 5kg (11 lb).

## Intuitive operation and transparency

Untrained staff often need to be drafted in to cope with periods of peak demand. If such a strategy is adopted, then Böwe Systec recommends the use of systems and software that are as intuitive and user-friendly as possible to operate. Its systems really come into their own when new staff need to be rapidly brought up to speed on the machines.

The company’s fully integrated software concepts ensure a high degree of production transparency. The use of RFID technology, sensors and barcodes makes it possible to track every product throughout the process. A warehouse management system delivers the necessary transparency during picking and dispatch.

Large post and parcel centers are far from the only operations where automation is important. Böwe Systec’s consultants develop precise models based on an analysis of the current situation and a company’s goals, suggest alternatives, and show companies of any size what ‘smart automation’ means when existing and new technology work together in harmony.

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