

Datalogic Technology Brings 100% Inspection to Logistics Provider - Datalogic

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The Overview

ModusLink offers extensive supply chain and logistics services to clients across the globe. Headquartered in the Netherlands, this value-added service provider delivers quality and productivity, offering an extensive array of services. "Our services are far-reaching, we set up and manage ecommerce, provide call centers, financial management services, reverse logistics and full service fulfillment," says Michel van Dijk, Project Engineer at ModusLink in Venray.

From its distribution center in North Limburg, ModusLink carries out logistics operations for a range of major clients. The enterprise is working to specialize in the B2C market for high quality products and one of its clients is a leading manufacturer of navigation systems. This clients' products are produced and stocked by ModusLink to ensure rapid delivery.

The Challenge

ModusLink provides complete order fulfillment services with four production lines able to produce approximately 45,000 items per day. While production speed is a priority, quality is an integral part of their offering; it is what keeps customers coming back. Order size can vary from 10 to 10,000 units per order and each order requires inspection. Random sampling was used to inspect correct stickers, part numbers, text, degree of completeness, client specifications and more. Quality Supervisor Katarzyna Szachnowska states "The number of inspection points could reach over 100 per order and on every order we perform a 100% weight inspection."

The thorough quality control process required a large number of quality control staff. Production volumes required at least one quality control employee per production line twelve hours per day. Van Dijk continues "The inspections cost a lot of time and money, which is why we began looking for a more effective solution."

An analysis of the most frequently made errors yielded a solution specification. A key specification was the requirement that inspection could not impact production line speed. The goal was to expand 100% inspection beyond only the weight. "We hoped to check the outside of the packaging according to codes, stickers, etc. without unnecessarily reducing the speed of the production line," says Szachnowska.

Solution

The requirements made the search for a solution difficult. Existing vision systems were insufficient or would only partially meet the requirements. Finally, a shortlist of four suppliers was evaluated and ModusLink selected Kobobss, from Yerseke. As a certified Datalogic Partner, Kobobss supplied ModusLink with an inspection system that met all their needs and requirements. "Kobobss expertise and a history of results were the deciding factors for us," says Van Dijk. ModusLink installed systems on each production line.

Each inspection system contains Datalogic cameras, sensors and scanners. One camera inspects the top of the packaging while another camera inspects the sides. A Datalogic Gryphon™ bar code scanner is incorporated for quick and easy system configuration and a touchscreen provides an intuitive user interface. A Datalogic S8 sensor detects the incoming product to initiate inspection. The inspection system automatically and dynamically checks the weight of each order it processes. The system is fast and flexible with expandability for adding a camera for inspection of the bottom.

Results

The system was installed and fine tuned. "Every issue was resolved to our satisfaction and everything works perfectly," explains Van Dijk. Selecting the inspection protocol is easy using the Gryphon scanner or the touchscreen interface. "By scanning the part number of the order, the system knows exactly which set checks need to be performed." The inspection protocol can be easily adjusted or expanded to include new products. The system flexibility keeps production downtime to the absolute minimum assuring high levels of productivity.

Moduslink estimates a savings of up to 40% on inspection staff costs. Van Dijk states "The most important thing is that this solution has helped us to realize 100% inspections without having to make any concessions to productivity. This benefits both us and our clients, and ultimately, consumers, too."

Client: ModusLink

Industry: Third party logistics

Application: Quality Control/Inspection Systems

Country: The Netherlands

Datalogic partner: Kobobss - Yerseke