



Turning the Corner with Technology: Global Chocolate Producer Finds Sweet Satisfaction with New Warehouse Automation

For world-renowned chocolate producer Lindt & Sprungli, a new waveless picking and warehouse automation expansion produced sweet results. The confectionary king, which has been in business for more than 165 years, faced significant business challenges including new government regulations and customer labeling demands as well as growing volume. Realizing it needed to make major changes at its Stratham, New Hampshire distribution center in 2007, the company chose Invata Intralogistics's *Fasttrak*® warehouse software and control system as part of a new building project.

Pallets of the company's delicious chocolate products are sent into the warehouse on a pallet conveyor. They are then transferred to a high-bay storage and retrieval area and inventory lots are bar-coded and scanned to ensure fresh chocolate for each waiting customer. Once orders begin, so does the waveless picking process.

Waveless picking is a newer approach to managing inventory orders. Instead of sending order information in "waves," the waveless process allows for a more dynamic, real-time order fulfillment process so workers aren't experiencing downtimes between waves and warehouse conditions can release new orders as finished orders are completed. The *Fasttrak*® system features an extensive conveyor system with 12 different types of conveyors, a sliding shoe sortation system with 13 separate lanes and specialized software that enables the company to easily and instantaneously compare current inventory to incoming orders. Product is moved at more than 100 packages per minute speed along the miles of conveyor belts in the automated warehouse. At the end of the process digital display boards direct workers as to how to best build pallets from completed orders.

Today the company continues to enjoy serving loyal customers in 120 countries and is realizing rich profits.

Sources:

"Waveless Picking Sweetens Bottom Line." *Invata Intralogistics Case Study*. Invata Intralogistics, n.d. Web. 9 May 2014.

Lindt & Sprungli Annual Report 2013. Rep. Zurich: Chocoladefabriken Lindt & Sprungli AG, 2014. Web. 15 May 2014.

