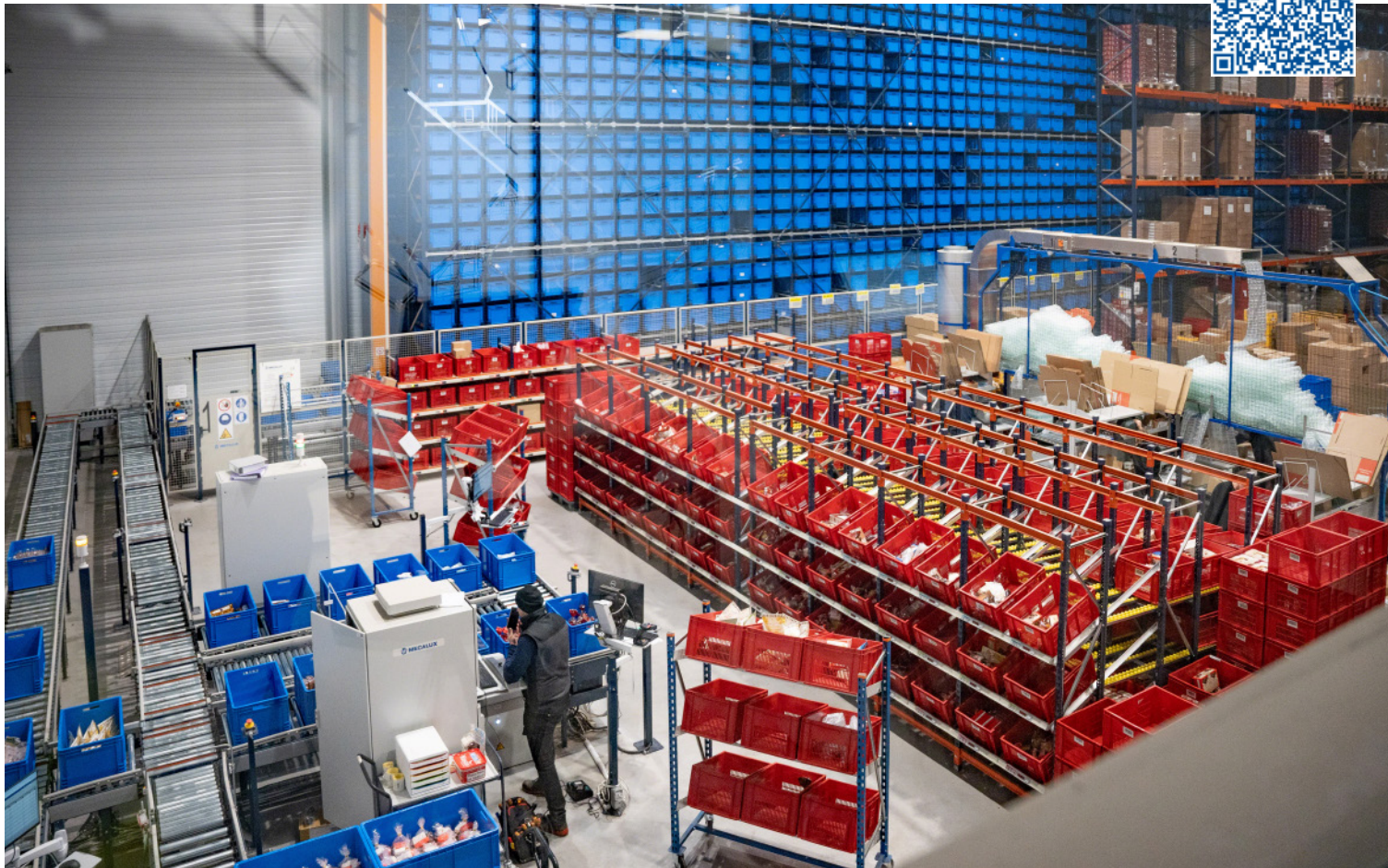


# Omnichannel logistics with 500 daily orders

Fortwenger, a gingerbread cake and biscuit manufacturer, digitalises and automates two warehouses to ensure traceability and streamline order fulfilment.

Country: **France** | Sector: **food & beverage**



## CHALLENGES

- Digitalise the management of gingerbread cakes and biscuits.
- Automate the storage of finished goods and streamline e-commerce order fulfilment.
- Adapt logistics operations to growing omnichannel demand.

## SOLUTIONS

- Miniload system (AS/RS for boxes).
- Easy WMS warehouse management system.
- Semi-automated Pallet Shuttle system.
- Selective pallet racking.
- Drive-in pallet racking.
- Mezzanine floor.

## BENEFITS

- Comprehensive, real-time control of 1,000+ SKUs.
- Automatic movement of around 2,000 unit loads a day between receiving, picking and shipping.
- Fulfilment of 500 orders daily sent to shops, distributors and online customers.

Fortwenger is a French company specialising in gingerbread cake and biscuit production. Founded in 1768, it is renowned for its artisanal recipes, commitment to quality and authentic pastries. The company operates its own shops and has an extensive distribution network in France and beyond. Known for its dedication to Alsatian tradition, Fortwenger also adds its own touch to classic confections while using premium ingredients, upholding its reputation for over two centuries.

» **Founded: 1768**

» **Production centres: 3**

» **Shops: 10**

For over 250 years, Fortwenger, a gingerbread cake and biscuit manufacturer, has blended tradition with innovation across all its departments. Recently, the company has incorporated technology into its production and logistics processes to adapt to market changes.

One of Fortwenger's latest challenges was the launch of its online store to expand internationally. Entering the e-commerce space required the company to revamp its entire logistics set-up. "Selling our gingerbread sweets online meant rethinking our supply chain. Our priorities are to ensure high-quality service, improve delivery times and offer a wide product selection," says Florent Schmitt, the company's Assistant Manager.

How has Fortwenger optimised its logistics operations to tackle the challenges of omnichannel distribution? By leveraging new technologies to track inventory and guarantee fast order fulfilment.

The French manufacturer manages its logistics processes across two facilities in neighbouring towns: Gertwiller, home to its production plant and main warehouse, and Goxwiller, which stores finished goods just 3 km away from the production centre. "Our logistics processes are omnichannel. We supply physical stores and distributors, while online orders are sent from Goxwiller. We process around 500 orders daily, though in peak season, we can ship up to 1,000 packages a day," says Schmitt.

#### **Digital warehouse with 1,000 SKUs**

Fortwenger's logistics operations begin in Gertwiller, a small town in France's Alsace region renowned for its traditional gingerbread. There, the company stores inventory from its three production plants, in Gertwiller, Ensisheim and Molsheim.

To ensure the traceability of its 1,000 SKUs, Fortwenger uses the Easy WMS warehouse management system. This software also organises all operations by providing operators with precise instructions for handling each product. Mecalux's Easy WMS is integrated with Fortwenger's Sage 100c ERP system to boost productivity.

In addition to implementing Easy WMS, Mecalux has equipped the Gertwiller facility with four storage solutions: the semi-automated Pallet Shuttle, selective pallet racking, drive-in pallet racking with a capacity for nearly 2,000 pallets, and a mezzanine floor that has doubled the useful area.

#### **Miniload AS/RS for finished goods**

The miniload automated storage and retrieval system (AS/RS) in the neighbouring town of Goxwiller is designed to meet the needs of

the growing online customer base purchasing Fortwenger's confections. A stacker crane for boxes with telescopic forks simultaneously transports two totes weighing up to 50 kg. The solution houses 10,864 totes in 295 m<sup>2</sup>.

"In the AS/RS, we store 250 SKUs of all our products, as well as inventory from our partners. Automation has eliminated order picking errors, prevented stockouts and increased our operators' autonomy," says Schmitt.

The miniload system fosters omnichannel logistics. "We process around 2,000 unit loads a day between receiving, fulfilment and dispatch. Automation enables operators to simultaneously fill up to 48 orders — 24 at each pick station — which are mostly shipped throughout France," says Schmitt.

**Mecalux's software provides real-time traceability of over 1,000 Fortwenger SKUs**



The two pick stations follow the goods-to-person picking method, where products are delivered to operators via stacker cranes and conveyors. Behind the workstations, merchandise to be shipped is placed in live storage for picking. With 48 positions, these shelves are equipped with a put-to-light (PTL) system, which uses lights to indicate the tote where operators should place each item and the required quantity. Mecalux also installed picking shelves with 64 PTL positions next to the AS/RS, completing the order picking area.

**Easy WMS oversees operations in the two warehouses, coordinating receiving, shipping and order fulfilment in both automated and conventional systems**

#### **Traceability of gingerbread biscuits and other sweets**

“We needed to computerise inventory control to achieve complete, real-time traceability. Digitalisation has been a turning point in our logistics operations because before, we



managed everything with pencil and paper, preparing orders manually, one by one. With Easy WMS, we're much more efficient,” says Schmitt.

Mecalux's Easy WMS warehouse management system directs all operations and movements across both Fortwenger warehouses. It supervises incoming and outgoing goods and organises order fulfilment in the automated and conventional storage systems. Easy WMS maintains strict control over all inventory through its continuous, bidirectional connection with Fortwenger's ERP program. Every time a product arrives at the warehouse, the WMS receives an ASN (advance shipping notice). It then uses a set of rules and algorithms to assign a location to each item based on its characteristics and turnover.

Items stored in the warehouse are fully traceable. The company knows the real-time location of all its biscuits and other confections and can accurately track their movements with the Easy WMS. This capability is essential for a food manufacturer like Fortwenger.

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*“Our omnichannel strategy is fully supported thanks to the logistics solutions from Mecalux, whom we've been working with for many years.”*

**Florent Schmitt**  
Assistant Manager, Fortwenger

#### **Omnichannel-ready logistics processes**

Integrating Fortwenger's physical and digital sales channels — supported by automated logistics operations — has enhanced the customer experience. “Our goal is to continue developing and sharing delicious products beyond the Alsace region. This involves continuously improving our e-commerce operations. Our omnichannel strategy is fully supported thanks to the logistics solutions from Mecalux, whom we've been working with for many years,” says Schmitt.