

CASE STUDY

CASSIS

Fashion retailer, Belgium

Cassis



PRODUCTIVITY DOUBLES THANKS TO VOICE PICKING

OBJECTIVE

- Meet the demand of a growing store network without increasing warehouse staff
- Smoothly process the increased demand during seasonal peaks in the distribution centre without effecting productivity

SOLUTION

- Multi-client order picking, cross-docking and put-away by integrating ZetesMedea Voice with the existing WMS

RESULTS

- Twice as many shops are supplied by the same number of distribution centre employees
- Huge gains in picking accuracy
- Temporary, inexperienced staff can be up and running quickly due to out-of-the-box speech recognition technology

Fashion retailer Cassis successfully manages seasonal peaks and twice as many shops, thanks to ZetesMedea Voice.

Cassis is a Belgian clothing retailer with shops in Belgium, Luxembourg, France and the Netherlands. In the last ten years, the business has more than doubled the number of branches in its store network. Not only did the brand expand to smaller shops and new shopping concepts, the e-commerce activity also increased. This brought new challenges to the already complex logistics process with parameters such as 'size', 'colour', 'folded', 'hanging', 'piece' and 'bulk'. In order to keep up with the increasing number of orders and the growing diversity of these orders, Cassis optimised its processes in its distribution centre by integrating ZetesMedea Voice.

Thanks to the voice solution, the picking and cross-docking process, as well as restocking, are carried out much faster whilst making fewer mistakes. The same warehouse occupancy now supplies more than double the amount of shops, with up to 20,000 items of clothing being picked daily. With a decreased total cost of ownership, the business is ready for further expansion using the new platform.

Logistics expansion in line with success

Cassis' store network currently consists of 130 branches, of which 100 are in Belgium. In the Netherlands, Cassis trades under a shop-in-shop concept in the Vroom&Dreesman department stores. All shops are supplied from the central distribution centre in Woutersbrakel (Belgium). Over the last ten years Cassis multiplied its store network from 60 to 130 sales outlets. This growth, together with the increasing e-commerce activity, puts significantly more pressure on the logistics centre.

Complex logistics process

As is often the case in the clothing sector, order picking at Cassis is a complex process. In- and outbound clothing items are determined by product characteristics such as 'size', 'colour', 'folded', 'hanging', 'piece' and 'bulk', whereby 'folded' and 'hanging' items are processed differently.

Due to the expansion of the store chain, the number of destinations has risen and therefore the number of orders has risen. But also the complexity of orders has increased: large stores, small stores, shop-in-shop and e-commerce all place different kinds of orders, varying in size and constitution (more or less piece goods or bulk) which have an impact on the procedures. Monique Courant, IT & Logistics Manager at Cassis, describes the challenge: "The result is a complex logistical

matrix that requires substantial efforts to correctly follow up all orders and maintain stock levels. The original system simply no longer sufficed."

"Today the same team of 11 employees handle over 20,000 clothing items for 130 sales outlets."

✓ **Monique Courant, IT & Logistics Manager, Cassis**

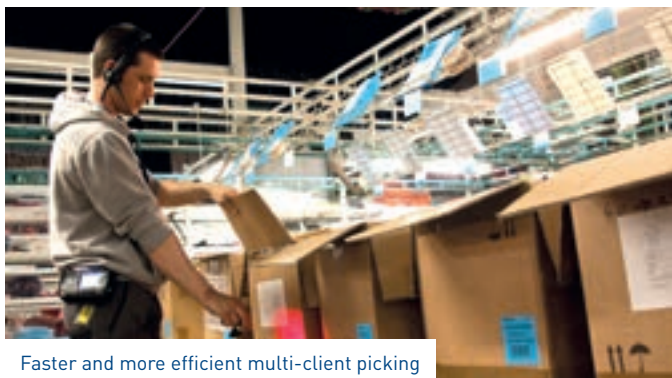
From RF scanning to voice picking

Originally, Cassis' orders were picked using mobile terminals. Monique Courant: "Barcode scanning and screen communication on wearable terminals allowed us to perfectly process our orders on time. For a limited number of (larger) shops, that all placed the same type of order, orders would simply be processed one after the other. Due to the expansion of the number of sales outlets, the previous technology was no longer able to process orders fast enough. We needed a new model and a different technology in order to increase the profitability."

After Monique Courant saw the ZetesMedea Voice solution in action at an existing customer in the same industry, she immediately made the decision. ZetesMedea is Zetes' logistics solution to efficiently manage all warehouse processes. The aim is to quickly and flexibly organise the processes, to reduce errors and lower the costs. ZetesMedea Voice focusses on the use of voice recognition technology and is used for order picking in warehouses amongst other things. Using the MCL Voice platform, ZetesMedea Voice offers the 'next generation' speaker an independent approach to speech recognition.

Optimised processes using voice

Cassis has applied the solution in different stages of its logistics process. At the start of the season, the new collection arrives at the distribution centre in Woutersbrakel. The majority of the clothing must be distributed as soon as possible so that all shops can build up their local stock for the season. This is done through cross-docking. The remaining clothing is stored in the distribution centre (put-away) and, throughout the season, distributed across the shops based on sales figures and availability on the shop floor (order picking).



Faster and more efficient multi-client picking

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The in- and outbound process of clothing items is organised around 4 important characteristics: 'folded' or 'hanging' and 'pre-packed' (type of bulk packaging consisting of different sizes of 1 article) or 'piece' (1 article, 1 size). Each item requires different logistics processes. Since the ZetesMedea Voice implementation, operators carrying out these processes are guided by the voice system. They are equipped with WT4190 voice terminals from Zebra, one of Zetes' leading hardware partners in the EMEA region. The terminal is connected with a ring scanner and a headset, and the system directs the operators to the right product and tells them which quantity is required. The operator will then confirm using a voice command and/or by scanning the product.

Efficient voice system

Productivity

Thanks to the ZetesMedea Voice solution, processes are carried out more quickly. Monique Courant: "In the past, every shop had to be processed individually using scanning before an operator could move on to a second order. The new voice system yields significant time savings. Operators are now working hands and eyes-free which enables them to, for example, carry out multi-client picking at a much faster pace. The system also optimises the rounds which further increases efficiency. As a result, we are now able to process many more shops: today the same team of 11 employees handle over 20,000 clothing items for 130 sales outlets."

Reduction in the number of errors

Monique Courant describes their journey with ZetesMedea Voice: "The flexibility of the system allowed us to adapt the processes to our needs, including the use of specific commands. Also the 'multi-modal' approach, whereby voice can be used together with scanning and printing, is paying off. It has significantly reduced the error margin."

Faster deployment for temporary workers

Lastly, Cassis also benefits from the untrained, speaker-independent approach that ZetesMedea Voice has to offer. By using the MCL Voice platform, the solution offers a 'next generation' approach to voice recognition. Operators no longer have to register their voice profile before they can start work. This process could easily take half an hour. Unlike a 'trained', or speaker-dependent voice system, operators simply have to log in, register approximately five keywords and they can start work right away. "No longer losing valuable time on training and having to invest in configurations, makes a huge difference. ZetesMedea Voice allows me to effortlessly call in temporary workers, which for a seasonal business, is a key asset," says Monique Courant.

Due to the expansion to 130 shops, a different approach to order picking was required in the distribution centre. With ZetesMedea Voice, the clothing retailer has opted for a sustainable platform which will not only be able to successfully manage the current volume of orders but also any future increase. "ZetesMedea Voice allows us to also logistically expand. To effortlessly meet this challenge, was key to us. We are ready for further expansion."

