****It does not always have to be shuttles:  
A three-storey carton warehouse by TGW for Witt****

**The Witt Group – expert for women's apparel, linen and home textile for the target group of 50+ – built the new Distribution Centre III for its about 41,500 items and 100,000 shipments per day. Together with TGW, the mail-order company realised an extraordinary three-storey carton warehouse solution.**

As multi-channel enterprise – catalogues, stores, web shops – the Witt Group has been investing about 100 million Euros in the new logistics centre for the past seven years. The most recent building is the Distribution Centre III (DC III) which has been supplying the picking processes as reserve warehouse with pre-sorted cartons since October 2014.

Centralised warehousing and reduced distances

Nine reserve warehouses in and around Weiden involved high replenishment efforts for order picking for the Witt Group. A consolidation of these warehouses at one site would optimise the replenishment and delivery performance. The rising number of sales regions and an expanded production range were further reasons for a new building. Witt opted for an extraordinary solution by TGW: A three-storey carton high bay warehouse (HBW). The general contractor from Wels (Austria) was responsible for the steelwork, conveyor and warehousing technology, material flow and control system as well as for the interfaces to the adjacent equipment.

Additionally, the DC III includes the new goods receiving area. In the P&D area of its HBW, there are a loop and a buffer for the pre-sorted cartons. Another highlight is the 70 metre long bridge made of glass via which the pre-sorted cartons are transported from the HBW to the picking area in the DC II.

Witt invested 41 million Euros in this largest building project of their company's history.

Storage on three levels

An average of 10,000 cartons with textiles from Europe and Asia arrive at Witt by lorry every day. After automatic labelling and barcode registration at four goods receiving stations, the cartons proceed to the first floor on the conveyor system.

Storable cartons will be stored in the three-storey high bay warehouse with its 450,000 storage locations – the heart of the installation. The HBW is 28 metres high, 48 metres wide and 132 metres long. A total of thirty TGW storage and retrieval machines (SRM) of the Mustang Evolution type with an overall performance of about 3,500 double cycles per hour supply the three levels with ten aisles each. "The three-storey high bay warehouse is the chief attraction of the installation. Normally, about 420,000 storage locations are occupied so that there is still some air to breathe," explains Roland Dietz, Head of Logistics at Witt.

In the area in front of the HBW, there is a conveyor system loop as well as twelve buffer lanes on two levels. This is where the cartons are retrieved to, pre-sorted in the sequence in which they will be required for picking onto roll containers in the DC II.

Different functions under one roof

The pre-sorted cartons will be transported batch by batch to the DC II on two conveyor system lines in the bridge. There, the picker will push up to 16 automatically delivered cartons off onto a roll container. The workstation for this was particularly designed by Witt, their company doctor and by TGW, taking into consideration ergonomic aspects.

In the DC III, there are also three rework workstations, seven workstations for quality management and picking of single items as well as six workstations for manual palletising.

The merchandise management as well as ERP system are "made by Witt". The material flow is managed by a Material Flow Controller (MFC) by TGW whose Commander controls also move the conveyor equipment and the storage and retrieval machines.

Fit for the future

The innovative solution by TGW for reserve warehousing effected the reduction of previously seven to three external warehouses. The centralisation saves distances, time and costs. The goods from the reserve warehouse are now faster available for picking.

Moreover, the high bay warehouse has already been designed for future expansions. Roland Dietz sees Witt well prepared for the present tasks and is looking ahead: "For the future, I wish that the installation will run as failsafe as possible and that TGW will continue their excellent support. Both parties have come closely together during the project. It was good work, and a very interesting project with a successful result. I can only point this out."

**Info box:**

The Witt Group is headquartered in the Upper Palatine town of Weiden and has been part of the Otto Group since 1987. For more than 100 years, Witt has been a famous mail-order company for women's apparel, linen and home textiles for customers aged 50-plus. With a total of eight brands, Witt serves the about 15 million customers in twelve countries throughout Europe. The 115 stores as well as online or postal orders are supplied and/or handled centrally from Weiden.

In the business year 2014/2015, the Witt Group generated a turnover of roughly 726 million Euros with 2,800 employees and is therefore one of the leading mail-order companies in the future market "50+".

www.tgw-group.com

**About TGW Logistics Group:**

TGW Logistics Group is a global leading systems provider of highly dynamic, automated and turn-key logistics solutions. Since 1969 the company has been implementing different internal logistics solutions, from small material handling applications to complex logistics centres.

With about 2,500 employees worldwide by now, the Group implements logistics solutions for leading companies in various industries. In the business year 2014/15, the TGW Logistics Group generated sales revenues of 475 million Euros.

**Pictures:**

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The DC III is connected to the DC II via a bridge with a length of 70 metres.

FEI\_Witt\_5.jpg

Roland Dietz, Head of Logistics at Witt: "The three-storey high bay warehouse is the chief attraction of the installation."

FEI\_Witt\_7.jpg

View of the area in front of the high bay warehouse: There's the conveyor system loop in the foreground, in the background the twelve buffer lanes on two levels.

FEI\_Witt\_16.jpg

Extraordinary solution: Three storeys with ten aisles each on top of each other.

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The fully automatic goods receiving area

FEI\_Witt\_50.jpg

The presorted cartons are transported from the high bay warehouse to the DC II via the 70-metre bridge.

FEI\_WITT\_52.jpg

Picking onto roll containers is a particularity at Witt: A picker pushes the pre-sorted cartons off to the roll container.

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