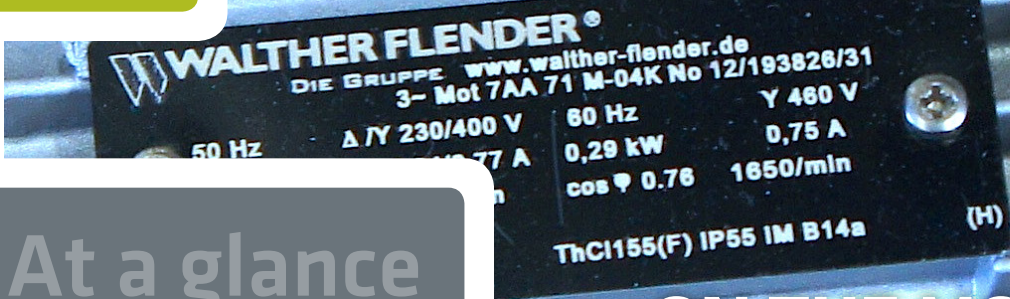


WALTHER
FLENDER
GROUP

CASE STUDY



ON THE MOVE WITH INTERMEC

At a glance

Profile:

The Walther Flender Group specializes in drive technology and conveyor systems as well as automotive spare parts. The company was founded in Düsseldorf in 1935 and now has several plants where it manufactures products of the highest quality, from single parts to complete solutions.

Business Problem:

Need for improved receipt of goods processes and material flow

Solution:

Intermec CN70 mobile computers, PB50 label printers and Enhanced Mobile Document Imaging (eMDI)

Results:

Incoming goods are now directly captured in real-time, resulting in increased efficiency, time savings, lower document management costs



“The devices from Intermec are very high quality and extremely robust. We have managed to significantly optimise our processes, which gives us very clear competitive advantage.”

Dr. Robert Schmidt, Management Boardmember, Walther Flender

The Walther Flender Group specializes in drive technology and conveyor systems as well as automotive spare parts. The company was founded in Düsseldorf in 1935 and now has several plants, manufacturing products of the highest quality, from single parts to complete solutions.

It has been owner-operated for more than 70 years, offering its industrial customers a broad portfolio of its own products, from drive assemblies, couplings, timing belts and conveyor systems - to industry-specific complete solutions. They have production facilities in Germany and China, in addition to six distribution centers (DCs) on three continents. One WFG DC is one of the largest timing belt distribution centers in Europe. As a result, the Walther Flender Groups can always guarantee customer proximity.

To ensure greater efficiency in materials management and DC logistics, Walther Flender relies on hardware and software from Intermec.

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Distribution Center Efficiency Required

In the automotive industry especially, but also for other customers of this long-established company, precision and real-time production are key requirements. A provider that develops, manufactures and delivers components for the leading brands in the industry must offer the highest degree of logistics reliability, in addition to a superior product quality.

Not only did WFG have a specific desire to continue optimizing processes, they also wanted to ensure they would always have an overview of their stock levels. Intermec partner, IngerSon IT Consulting GmbH, conducted a process analysis, which revealed clear opportunities for improvement in material flow and in the receiving.

Established in 2005 and with a clear focus on ERP and mobility, IngerSon IT Consulting GmbH provides WFG with services in all matters relating to IT in outsourcing and is now successfully established as a system integrator and solution provider in the automotive, manufacturing, service and logistics industry. The mobile software solution used at Walther Flender, Flexmobility hybridMX, is one of IngerSon subsidiary 3mobility solutions GmbH's products and is fully supported by both IngerSon and 3mobility solutions.

IngerSon noted that inbound goods were always recorded in several steps and then compared with Materials Management and Purchasing resulting in the delivery documents passing through several hands over the course of several hours before they could finally be digitally recorded in the ERP system.

Despite the good practice of checks and re-checks, IngerSon found that time delays were causing issues. The Quality Department in particular wanted incoming goods to be checked for defects immediately upon arrival. This caused incorrect deliveries to be transferred directly to the Complaints Department or Purchasing. In addition, too much time passed for inbound products to be received in the system and made available for customer shipments.

The solution implemented by Intermec and IngerSon IT, enables incoming goods to be scanned on the truck immediately upon delivery. This has significantly decreased the dock to stock cycle time and improved customer service levels.

Perfect Mix of Hardware and Software

The delivery documents are now processed in the Receiving Department in a single step. Using an Intermec CN70 mobile computer and Enhanced Mobile Document Imaging (eMDI) software, employees are able to make the documents immediately available as digital information in the Delivery Management System, which is linked to the ERP system. eMDI works with the advanced imaging technology in the Intermec mobile computer to convert paper documents into electronic files, quickly, reliably and on-site.

This single step is negligible in terms of additional work, and the resulting increase in efficiency is big – about one hour per worker per day. This change in process also allows the relevant department to handle any complaints immediately because all the information can be viewed in the system. eMDI also reduces the document management costs because a flatbed scanner is no longer required, streamlining overall office processes.

The robust CN70 mobile computer is perfectly suited to the warehouse environment – purpose built to withstand dirt, dust and drops to concrete. With its integrated 5 MP autofocus camera and unique eMDI software, the CN70 captures the delivery record and displays it without distortion, as though the document had been captured using a flatbed scanner. If the goods delivered or the delivery documents bear a barcode, the CN70's integrated barcode imager is also used to automatically create the link to an order in the ERP system and display the anticipated delivery on the CN70's screen.

The ERP solution receives data via the mobile business software Flexmobility, which integrates eMDI. The Flexmobility solutions come from 3mobility solutions, a subsidiary of Intermec partner, IngerSon IT Consulting.

Immediately after barcodes are captured on receipts, employees at WFG create a receipt label using the Intermec PB50 mobile label printer. The printer works much faster than competitors' models and fares extremely well in the harsh distribution center environment because of its ruggedness. The excellent software and hardware combination enable the required label to dispense in under a second with no waiting time for the operator.

The biggest gain in this process optimization project is that all data and labels required for further goods flow are now available immediately.

Additionally, the Sales Department can now dispatch products that have only just been received, have a real time overview of the stock on hand, and make reliable commitments about their ability to deliver. WFG can also supply urgent customer orders more quickly because the goods do not need to be stored first.

With the flexmobility hybridMX software and the Intermec CN70, WFG now has the flexibility to send the order directly to the-picking area. Other benefits of the optimization include significantly better audit security and more prompt billing.

Superior Overall Solution

Dr. Robert Schmidt, member of the management board at WFG, has no reservations about the overall solution implemented.

"We have managed to significantly optimize our processes, which gives us very clear competitive advantages," said Schmidt.

From his perspective, the Intermec products have played a significant part in this success.

"The devices from Intermec are very high-quality and extremely robust. We evaluated the products very closely in advance and were completely convinced by them in terms of performance and ruggedness," said Schmidt.

Everyone at the WFG feels very well serviced in all customer service aspects by Intermec partner IngerSon IT Consulting GmbH and its subsidiary, software service provider 3mobility solutions GmbH.

Ultimately, tangible improvements have been made in the "mobile DC" of the Walther Flender Group. Shortages and complaints have been massively reduced, goods movements are booked directly online and synchronization does not, as previously, involve time losses. Overall, the workload has been greatly reduced, which has also helped with staff acceptance of the equipment.

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