**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Bleckmann targets faster fulfilment with the AutoStore solution; an automated storage and retrieval system**

Bleckmann, experts in supply chain management for fashion and lifestyle brands, announces the ‘go-live’ of a new automated storage and retrieval system (ASRS) at its solar-powered fulfilment site in Grobbendonk, Belgium. The new integrated goods-to-person system is an integrated Kardex AutoStore solution with automated packing line and provides a streamlined alternative to traditional rack storage. It dramatically reduces inventory footprint while speeding up picking and packing operations. The new system is the latest step in Bleckmann’s automation strategy, which aims to address labour scarcity and provide a smoother fulfilment process.

**Less space, more speed**

The new AutoStore uses up to seven times less space than conventional manual picking area to store the same amount of inventory. This increases storage capacity, allowing more SKUs (from multiple customers) to be stored simultaneously and greatly reducing the risk of stock shortages. Items are also retrieved by radio-controlled robots, saving time by eliminating the need for employees to manually pick products.

The Kardex AutoStore is part of an integrated solution that requires minimal human intervention. This features an advanced conveyor system from carton erectors and an autonomous packing station with height reduction of the cartons, which significantly streamlines the fulfilment process. “From the moment a product enters the AutoStore until it leaves the warehouse in a carton , it will have only been touched by a single pair of hands,” explained Stefan Schepers, Automation Specialist at Bleckmann. “This allows us to reduce the time between the receipt of an order and its departure from the warehouse by up to 60%.”

**An integrated solution**

Automating the labour-intensive picking and packing process will enable Bleckmann’s clients to offer their customers later cut-off times for next-day delivery, among other benefits. These include intelligent demand forecasting. “The AutoStore system automatically makes the most popular items more accessible, so that they can be dispatched faster,” said Jens Hooyberghs, Automation Project Manager at Bleckmann. “It’s also possible to programme the system ahead of peak sales periods so top-selling items are available even quicker – saving valuable time during those extra-busy moments.”

**Lights-out logistics**

Switching to the AutoStore solution has many other benefits, according to Stefan: “The new system greatly reduces the likelihood of picking mistakes,” he continued. “It also offers exceptional flexibility and scalability. This means that we can start with a basic set-up and expand it when clients need extra capacity – during the Black Friday period, for example – without disrupting ongoing operations.” Another advantage of the AutoStore system is its low energy consumption. Ten robots at work use the same amount of energy as one vacuum cleaner. As the robots can work in the dark, energy can also be saved by switching off warehouse lights.

Bleckmann is currently onboarding its first client onto the AutoStore system and will be closely monitoring the results of this pilot project over the coming months. “Based on the outcome of this pilot, we will evaluate the quality and efficiency gains that the solution enables,” concluded Jens. “We’re excited about the potential productivity benefits, and the scope for growth is huge – Kardex AutoStore looks set to become a key ally in making our operations safer, greener and more efficient.”

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**About Kardex**

Kardex is a leading intralogistics solution provider of automated storage, retrieval and material handling systems. With two entrepreneurially managed divisions, Kardex Remstar and Kardex Mlog, and as a global AutoStore partner, the Kardex mission is to provide solutions and services to increase efficiency in the storage and handling of goods and materials on a global scale. For more information visit: [www.kardex.com](http://www.kardex.com)

**About Bleckmann**

Bleckmann is a market leader in Supply Chain Management (SCM) services for fashion and lifestyle brands. Founded in 1862, Bleckmann developed from a transport company to a full supply chain solutions provider with specific expertise in e-fulfillment. From its strong base in Europe, the company expanded into the US and Asia, enabling Bleckmann to serve customers around the world. Its investments and extensive experience in IT solutions ensure that Bleckmann offers a uniform platform to its customers worldwide. Around five thousand employees are available every day to support Bleckmann's clients and keep their promises. With a turnover of EUR 564 million, Bleckmann has the size and flexibility to provide world-class solutions for its clients. For more information, visit [www.bleckmann.com](http://www.bleckmann.com)

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