

BITO Plastic bins and containers have become the red thread that links all logistic processes at Optimal

Flexi-warehousing

The automotive supplier Optimal KG headquartered at Langenbach, Germany, has implemented a standardised bin and container system to allow integrated automation of their material flow. Offering many possibilities for subdivision, bins and containers from BITO-Lagertechnik Bittmann GmbH have considerably improved handling in warehousing, interim storage, in-house transport and order picking in view of space requirement and process reliability.

Optimal KG provides spare parts for axles, brakes, steering and motors as well as other products for motor vehicles. The supplier provides parts and components to the unaffiliated spare parts market from which production partners around the world, original equipment manufacturers and quality suppliers replenish their stocks. Optimal was originally organised as a classic packaging and distribution business, but as their product range continued to grow, the company established several warehouse locations. In 2004, Optimal got into the spare parts business and enlarged their range to suit more than 1.200 different motor vehicle types. After some years, all storage and logistic resources had been exhausted. Last but not least, the difficulty was that the available 12.000 products are made of 18.000 different parts. For this reason, the company decided to build a new warehouse and distribution centre and to incorporate a packaging service.

In order to streamline their processes, Optimal decided in favour of stacking containers XL64421 RX in Euro footprint from BITO-Lagertechnik Bittmann GmbH, the storage specialist located at Meisenheim, Germany. In addition to BITO stacking containers, the order included trays to accommodate non standardised bins, bins in intermediate sizes and small parts bins to allow handling in ASRS.

Plastic bins, containers and trays are flexible in use and ensure process reliability

In a first step, BITO supplied some 35.000 heavy duty stacking containers XL64421RX with diagonal base ribbing and two barcode labels. Plastic trays (type XLT64) with fixing elements and XL stacking containers in 3 smaller sizes have also been delivered. The smaller size containers interstack and fit the dimensions of the XLT64 tray. In view of the different storage and in-house transport requirements, BITO also provided several divider options.

The wide range of divider configurations which can be adapted at any time to suit various purposes in warehousing, intermediate storage, in-house transport and order picking allows the automotive supplier Optimal to optimise space utilisation and increase process safety. The European standard container system complete with side-to-side and front-to-length dividers helps simplify handling in storage and facilitates order picking. In peak times, 100 to 150 pallets arrive daily in the goods-in department. After the receiving inspection has been done, the incoming goods are repacked into BITO containers or, depending on their nature, stay on their pallet which is fed into the automated highbay store. According to requirement, the goods are either repacked for direct delivery to a customer or picked for further assembly. Each working day, as many as 2.500 parcels and 80 to 150 pallets are dispatched from the logistics centre to the customer.

The BITO XL container series enabled Optimal to multiply their capacity by five without increasing personnel levels. Super A items with a very fast turnover which immediately go out to the customer are stocked in BITO containers which are fed into a separate automated bin storage facility with 470 bin storage positions located close to the dispatch workstations. This guarantees very short travel routes. This example shows that maximum space utilisation goes hand in glove with process optimisation and that the red thread concept which is to link all logistic potentials has been successfully implemented with BITO European standard containers.

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Picture underlines:



Picture 1: For their in-house material flow, Optimal KG opted for the modular BITO container system XL. All XL models interstack and ideally match the dimensions of BITO XL trays.



Picture 2: The BITO container system in European standard sizes which is employed in all logistic processes at Optimal allowed to accelerate material flow and increase order picking performance.



Picture 3: Incoming goods are packed into BITO containers of different sizes and then fed into the automated small parts storage facility for interim storage.

BITO-Lagertechnik Bittmann GmbH

BITO-Lagertechnik, headquartered at Meisenheim, Germany, specialises in storage and workshop equipment as well as in order picking systems. The product portfolio includes shelving and racking, bins and containers as well as workshop equipment and accessories for use in any industry. BITO customers can choose from a wide range of standard products developed and manufactured by BITO and benefit from customised project solutions along with the reliable and competent BITO service – from a single source. The medium-sized, family owned company operates production plants in Germany and has a joint venture with production plant in India. BITO runs 13 subsidiaries in Western and Eastern Europe, 1 subsidiary in Dubai and operates sales offices in Austria, Bulgaria and Russia. In 2009, the group with a staff of 720 achieved a turnover of 125 million EUR.

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