

Premium service for premium brands

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Fenix Outdoor International AG is building a supply chain that supports multiple distribution channels, from wholesale and retail to omnichannel and ecommerce. Manhattan SCALE™ provides Fenix Outdoor International AG with a modern warehouse management system (WMS) that efficiently runs their manual and automated warehouse operations.

From a brisk walk in the woods to a multi-day trek through the Scandinavian highlands, Fenix Outdoor International AG supplies clothing and equipment through their own brands Fjällräven, Hanwag, Brunton, Primus, Tierra and Royal Robbins. Shoppers can find these popular products in their 70 owned stores in Scandinavia and Germany with names like Globetrotter, Naturkompaniet, Partioaitta and Friluftslund, but also in thousands of other outdoor stores around the world.

Premium service

The supply chain plays an important role in Fenix’s strategy. “We are building a supply chain that allows us to handle the flow of goods and information as effectively and efficiently as possible. That enables us to offer premium brands a premium service. To do this, we use efficient, fast and competitive processes that allow us to operate flexibly, reliably and proactively. And of course, sustainability plays an important role in all of this,” says Marcel Gerrits, global supply chain director at Fenix.



Fenix's supply chain includes several warehouses, of which those in Aurora (Colorado) and Ludwigslust (Germany) are the largest. From these warehouses, goods go to the distribution centres of internationally operating retailers, local outdoor stores and consumers who have placed an order online. This results in complex operations with flows that vary significantly in terms of the number of order lines, volumes and packaging.

Fenix relies on Manhattan SCALE to control the operations in these warehouses. Thanks to its wealth of functionality, Manhattan SCALE offers more optimisation possibilities. Manhattan SCALE is built on a Microsoft platform and is highly integrated with Dynamics AX09 / AX12 R3, which was an essential requirement for Fenix.

"A thorough solution and market knowledge are the determining factors toward achieving peak performance in warehouse management, now and in the future."

Marcel Gerrits, Global Supply Chain Director Fenix Outdoor

Pouch sorter

Fenix first chose to implement Manhattan SCALE in Louisville, Colorado, its 11,000-square-foot manual warehouse near Denver. Within six months, the standard version of the WMS was implemented without additional customisation. Fenix used the experience in Louisville to implement Manhattan SCALE in its warehouse in Ludwigslust, 120 kilometres southeast of Hamburg. Ludwigslust is a brand new 30,000-square-meter automated warehouse. The warehouse is used to deliver online orders and the supply of its stores in Germany and Scandinavia. There are 50,000 articles in stock at this location, and the 100 employees ship 4.5 million items annually.

The heart of the warehouse is a long pouch sorter, which connects six order picking zones on three mezzanine floors. "This pouch sorter makes batch picking possible," says Gerrits. "Manhattan SCALE supports the entire order picking process. The WMS intelligently composes the batches, so the pickers have to travel as little as possible. Using barcode scanning, each pick is validated and processed in the WMS. But not all items fit in the pouches. Large items are located elsewhere in the warehouse and picked differently. The WMS ensures that all items are consolidated by order at the end of the order picking process," Gerrits explains.

Returns handling

Another significant advantage is the handling of returns. "Efficiently handling returns is enormously important in retail and ecommerce. The pouch sorter in combination with the WMS makes this possible." The WMS also communicates flawlessly with the warehouse control system that controls the pouch sorter, conveyors, elevators and other systems of warehouse designer SSI Schäfer.

For shipping orders, a link was made to SendIT's carrier management system.

What appeals to Fenix is the ease of configuring Manhattan SCALE. "We process different flows in our warehouses, all with their own order patterns and specifications. If we get an additional requirement that requests us to add an extra step to the process, we can modify the WMS ourselves without seeking help from Manhattan Associates. We can control how an order flows through the warehouse, so we can switch quickly and operate flexibly."



Big future plans

Fenix has big plans for the Ludwigslust facility in the future. After commissioning the first hall in 2019, the warehouse has now been expanded twice. Gerrits does not expect it to stop there. "Initially, the focus in the warehouse was mainly on supplying our own stores.

Now that that is going well, we want to move the stock of even more brands to Ludwigslust and integrate other flows from our wholesale and ecommerce activities. Ultimately, Ludwigslust should grow into our European hub."

The warehouse management software from Manhattan Associates will continue to play an important role in this. "Manhattan Associates is a renowned company that knows how retail and wholesale works. A thorough solution and market knowledge are the determining factors toward achieving peak performance in warehouse

management, now and in the future.”

CHALLENGE

Fenix was looking for a single WMS to oversee all of its warehouse operations worldwide, as well as a system that was also capable of controlling complex processes with a high degree of automation.

SOLUTION

With Manhattan SCALE, Fenix is able to efficiently route different flows, each with their own characteristics, throughout the warehouse.

RESULT

The new WMS facilitates Fenix’s rapid growth. Thanks to the ease of use, the company can adjust the configuration itself and therefore quickly respond to new opportunities and developments.



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