

SUCCESS STORY



Good taste pays off

Coca-Cola HBC Austria optimizes its yard management in Edelstal with the help of the intelligent software SYNCROSUPPLY in a completely transparent and almost fully automated manner. As a result, the Gate-to-Gate time of the trucks could be reduced by 45% and the accuracy of on-time completion increased to 85%.

Coca-Cola HBC Austria

The company supplies the entire Austrian market with Coca-Cola products and employs around 900 people in Austria - at its highly modern production and logistics center and regional sales centers and distribution warehouses. As one of Austria's leading beverage partners, Coca-Cola HBC Austria offers to the well-known brands Coca-Cola, Fanta and Sprite also the Austrian mineral water Römerquelle, FUZETEA, the premium organic brand Honest, Cappy and the energy drink Monster.

<https://at.coca-colahellenic.com>

The Coca-Cola brand is one of a few that has made it into the minds of a broad, international audience. It is known for its distinctive taste and for the ubiquity of its products. Even in foreign places, you can always find something familiar: a fridge filled with Coca-Cola bottles. From a pharmacy in Atlanta to one of the leading suppliers in the beverage sector - this success is primarily the result of the Coca-Cola Company's decentralized licensing system. Worldwide availability combined with local roots means that it is produced where it is sold. Coca-Cola HBC Austria is one of these local bottling partners. In addition to other brands, most Coca-Cola beverages sold in Austria are produced at its bottling plant in Edelstal. Up to 250 trucks transport the products from the site to the cities as well as to the remotest regions of the country.

With that amount of inbound and outbound deliveries, yard management poses a major challenge. Every single truck has to be checked, weighed and navigated through the yard. A consistent workload at the loading stations has to be ensured to avoid additional waiting times and queues in front of and on the premises. This complex process not only causes a high planning effort, but also requires a large number of resources, such as trucks, forklifts and manpower. These have to be utilised only where they are really needed.



Intelligent software increases performance

The previous manually implemented processes of yard logistics were to be organized more efficiently. While the progress of automation in the production and warehouse of the plant was already very advanced, digitalization on the yard was obsolete. By optimizing the time slot management and truck supply control, costs should be saved, and existing capacities should be used more efficiently. In addition, predictability is to be improved and the Gate-to-Gate and waiting times should be reduced in the long-term so the service level will increase.

As part of these changes, Coca-Cola HBC Austria decided to use the software SYNCROSUPPLY from INFORM. This intelligent solution includes a time slot booking portal, which enables carriers to perform their bookings for several customers via one central platform. The software allocates suitable time slots for the deliveries based on the availability on site, priorities and other transport parameters.

The site employees are always able to check transparently which trucks are currently there or are scheduled to arrive in the future. In addition, SYNCROSUPPLY has several controlling functions from the yard entry to the ramp that can coordinate the entire truck flow. The software is able to calculate optimized sequences and quickly reorganize the whole process in case of unpredicted disruptions. "Our algorithms are able to optimally reallocate resources in real time if something changes in the entire process by taking all actual conditions into consideration", explains Matthias Wurst, Director Business Development Industrial Logistics at INFORM. "As an add-on, Coca-Cola HBC Austria also uses an app that supports the truck drivers and intelligently manages the yard logistics. The forklift drivers can document every single step in a lean way via the app, transmit status updates by the push of a button, and add annotations."

A Smartphone as Co-Driver

The app offers truck drivers the option of already completing the registration process on their own device prior to their arrival. Alternatively, registration takes place on site via the self-registration terminal, where all relevant information is exchanged, and a mobile device is handed out. Once the software calls up the truck, the driver receives a push notification and is allowed to drive forward. "We have additionally created an interface to all hardware on the yard. Our system is connected to all barriers, weighing systems, QR readers and much more. It can record corresponding data and communicate orders," Wurst added. "For example, the entrance barrier only opens when the license plate has been read via an ANPR camera and is validated by the data in the system."

From now on, the driver only follows the app instructions. He is navigated across the site by images showing the route and displayed arrows. All stops are embedded in the process in a way that allows direct interaction with site staff without leaving the cabin of the truck. The weighing process is also fully automated, and the truck's incoming weight is recorded by the system. After a resource and availability check, the truck is assigned to an appropriate loading position. The waiting forklift driver knows via another app exactly when and with what kind of products he has to load on or unload from which truck. Once the loading process is complete, the securing of the load is documented by a photo. The vehicle is weighed again, and a comparison is made between the actual and planned load weight. Before the truck can leave the premises, the mobile device (if borrowed) is returned via a terminal with integrated RFID technology.



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Measurable Success

Today the use of the software enables an almost fully automated dispatch of hundreds of trucks per day. The system ensures complete transparency of all newly arriving and scheduled trucks. It independently calculates the optimal sequence, considering all existing transport parameters. Coca-Cola HBC Austria benefits from significantly more efficient resource and capacity utilization, which is especially the result of the improved planning capability. In addition, further successes were achieved:

- Reduced Gate-to-Gate time by 45%
- Increased accuracy of on-time completion to 85%
- Reduced and optimized required loading point resources
- Improved safety and health standards



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In the company, the project is considered as a best-practice implementation of Industry 4.0 and is a first step in the yard management automation of several plants of the Coca-Cola HBC Group. So far, the software is only being used in Austria, but further locations have already been planned.

If you would like to know more, we look forward to hearing from you:

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