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Mensuration not calculation

Swiss stores system revolutionises the in-house logistics at Kostwein

Murten, 16th November 2010: The Swiss weighing technology and application specialist DIGI SENS has installed the fully automated „e-nventory“ stores system at the mechanical engineering company Kostwein in Klagenfurt. Each of the present 6,000 stores positions is equipped with a precise digital balance, which determines the exact number of articles contained in the bin by measuring its weight. All weighing locations are linked to a central server and give the operator at any given moment a reliable status report on all stocks. The quantities reported by e-nventory are genuinely physically present, without the uncertainty factor of previous systems, which merely deduced their figures by counting stores bookings in and out.

Kostwein, a successful sub-supplier for mechanical engineering companies in the whole of Europe, manages not only C-parts with e-nventory but also sub-assemblies and semi-finished products.

Alexander Taupe, project manager: “e-nventory is convincing in many respects. Because the system constantly supplies reliable stock figures, we were already able to reduce our “safety reserves“ by 20 %. The warehouse organises the necessary orders by itself, based exclusively on the actual measured stock level, the minimum quantity permitted, the procurement batch size and delivery time. With e-nventory we order independently of the production orders. Thanks to that we are faster and we can rely on the fact that we always have sufficient parts in-house.“

e-nventory generates each day, at 3 o'clock in the morning, a draft purchase order, based on the minimum quantities defined. This is briefly

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checked by a member of the purchasing staff when he starts work and immediately passed on further. Taupe also wants to revolutionise the arrival of goods with the system and put the goods directly into stores after the incoming inspection. The correction to the stock level takes place automatically and any manual entry of deliveries can be dropped.

The Swiss manufacturer DIGI SENS developed around the “bin with weight measurement” a comprehensive, comfortable system for parts management. e-ventory exists for both shelf and pallet stores. Solutions can also be offered for bars and coils. The only 400 mm deep shelves contain two to three times more articles in the same space as a two-container Kanban-system. The stores locations can be spread all over the world, because the local controller sends its stock data to a central server in Switzerland. The data is processed there and can be called up by the operators.

Depending on customer requirement, this can either be the actual measured weight on each balance or the real quantities expressed as numbers of parts. Standard interfaces allow connection of e-ventory to any goods management system, this makes the firm more flexible, quicker to react and therefore more competitive. At Kostwein they hope to already recuperate the investment in the new stores technology after only three years.

DIGI SENS General Manager Martin Lustenberger: “Amongst our customers we have production firms and trading companies. C-parts suppliers have been managing their stocks all over the world for years with this system, recognising trends early on, thus allowing them to optimise their procurement or production in response to customer demand. “

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Pictures:

Figure 1: Revolution in parts management: thanks to weighing technology the operator can always see the actual stock available.

figure 2: Alexander Taupe from the Austrian mechanical engineering firm Kostwein: "The introduction of the new stores system has given us an edge over the competition."

Figure 3: The e-nventory bins with digital weighing technology communicate either via a bus cable or by wireless with the central server.

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