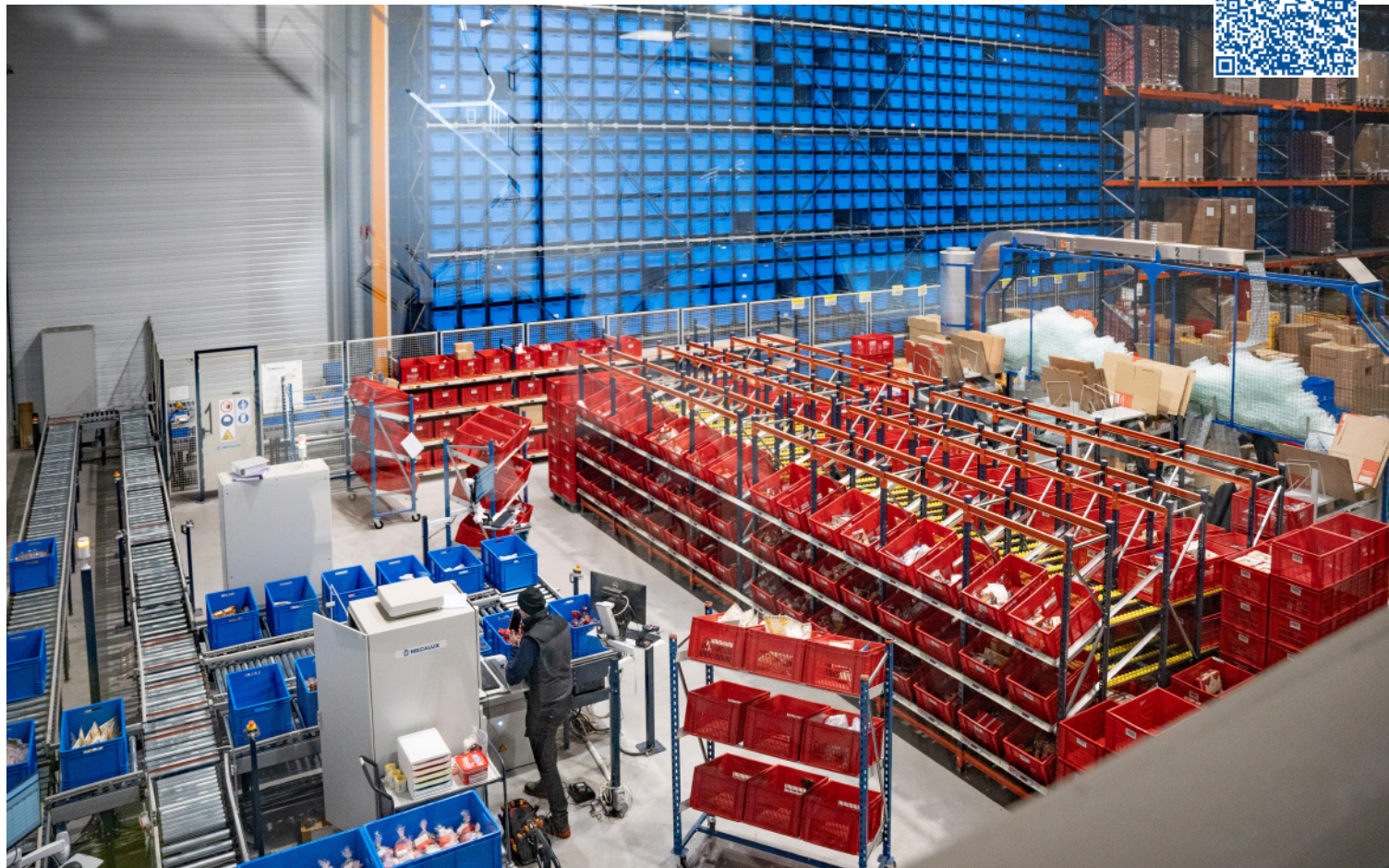


# Omnichannel logistics with 500 daily orders

Fortwenger, a gingerbread cake and cookie manufacturer, digitalizes and automates two warehouses to ensure traceability and streamline order fulfillment.

Country: **France** | Sector: **food & beverage**



## CHALLENGES

- Digitalize the management of gingerbread cakes and biscuits.
- Automate the storage of finished goods and streamline e-commerce order fulfillment.
- Adapt logistics operations to growing omnichannel demand.

## SOLUTIONS

- Mini-load system (AS/RS for boxes).
- Easy WMS warehouse management system.
- Semi-automated Pallet Shuttle system.
- Selective pallet racking.
- Drive-in pallet racking.
- Mezzanine floor racking system.

## BENEFITS

- Comprehensive, real-time control of 1,000+ SKUs.
- Automatic movement of around 2,000 unit loads a day between receiving, picking and shipping.
- Fulfillment of 500 orders daily sent to stores, distributors, and online customers.

Fortwenger is a French company specializing in gingerbread cake and cookie production. Founded in 1768, it is renowned for its artisanal recipes, commitment to quality, and authentic pastries. The company operates its own stores and has an extensive distribution network in France and beyond. Known for its dedication to Alsatian tradition, Fortwenger also adds its own touch to classic confections while using premium ingredients, upholding its reputation for over two centuries.

» **Founded: 1768**

» **Production centers: 3**

» **Shops: 10**

For over 250 years, Fortwenger, a gingerbread cake and cookie manufacturer, has blended tradition with innovation across all its departments. Recently, the company has incorporated technology into its production and logistics processes to adapt to market changes.

One of Fortwenger's latest challenges was the launch of its online store to expand internationally. Entering the e-commerce space required the company to revamp its entire logistics setup. "Selling our gingerbread sweets online meant rethinking our supply chain. Our priorities are to ensure high-quality service, improve delivery times, and offer a wide product selection," says Florent Schmitt, the company's Assistant Manager.

How has Fortwenger optimized its logistics operations to tackle the challenges of omnichannel distribution? By leveraging new technologies to track inventory and guarantee fast order fulfillment.

The French manufacturer manages its logistics processes across two facilities in neighboring towns: Gertwiller, home to its production plant and main warehouse, and Goxwiller, which stores finished goods just two miles away from the production center. "Our logistics processes are omnichannel. We supply physical stores and distributors, while online orders are sent from Goxwiller. We process around 500 orders daily, though in peak season, we can ship up to 1,000 packages a day," says Schmitt.

#### **Digital warehouse with 1,000 SKUs**

Fortwenger's logistics operations begin in Gertwiller, a small town in France's Alsace region renowned for its traditional gingerbread. There, the company stores inventory from its three production plants, in Gertwiller, Ensisheim, and Molsheim.

To ensure the traceability of its 1,000 SKUs, Fortwenger uses the Easy WMS warehouse management system. This software also organizes all operations by providing associates with precise instructions for handling each product. Mecalux's Easy WMS is integrated with Fortwenger's Sage 100c ERP system to boost productivity.

In addition to implementing Easy WMS, Mecalux has equipped the Gertwiller facility with four storage solutions: the semi-automated Pallet Shuttle, selective pallet racking, drive-in pallet racking with a capacity for nearly 2,000 pallets, and a mezzanine floor racking system that has doubled the useful area.

Mini-load AS/RS for finished goods  
The mini-load automated storage and retrieval system (AS/RS) in the neighboring

town of Goxwiller is designed to meet the needs of the growing online customer base purchasing Fortwenger's confections. A stacker crane for boxes with telescopic forks simultaneously transports two totes weighing up to 110 lb. The solution houses 10,864 totes in 3,175 ft<sup>2</sup>.

"In the AS/RS, we store 250 SKUs of all our products, as well as inventory from our partners. Automation has eliminated order picking errors, prevented stockouts, and increased our associates' autonomy," says Schmitt.

The mini-load system fosters omnichannel logistics. "We process around 2,000 unit loads a day between receiving, fulfillment, and shipping. Automation enables associates to simultaneously fill up to 48 orders — 24 at

**Mecalux's software provides real-time traceability of over 1,000 Fortwenger SKUs**



each pick station — which are mostly sent to customers throughout France,” says Schmitt.

The two pick stations follow the goods-to-person picking method, where products are delivered to associates via stacker cranes and conveyors. Behind the workstations, merchandise to be shipped is placed in carton flow racks. With 48 positions, these shelves are equipped with a put-to-light (PTL) system, which uses lights to indicate the tote where associates should place each item and the required quantity. Mecalux also installed picking shelves with 64 PTL positions next to the AS/RS, rounding out the order picking area.

**Traceability of gingerbread cookies and other sweets**

“We needed to computerize inventory control

**Easy WMS oversees operations in the two warehouses, coordinating receiving, shipping, and order fulfillment in both automated and conventional systems**



“*Our omnichannel strategy is fully supported thanks to the logistics solutions from Mecalux, whom we’ve been working with for many years.*”

**Florent Schmitt**  
Assistant Manager, Fortwenger

to achieve complete, real-time traceability. Digitalization has been a turning point in our logistics operations because before, we managed everything with pencil and paper, preparing orders manually, one by one. With Easy WMS, we’re much more efficient,” says Schmitt.

Mecalux’s Easy WMS warehouse management system directs all operations and movements across both Fortwenger warehouses. It supervises incoming and outgoing goods and organizes order fulfillment in the automated and conventional storage systems. Easy WMS maintains strict control over all inventory through its continuous, bidirectional connection with Fortwenger’s ERP program. Every time a product arrives at the warehouse, the WMS receives an ASN (advance shipping notice). It then uses a set of rules and algorithms to assign a location to each item based on its characteristics and turnover.

Items stored in the warehouse are fully traceable. The company knows the real-time location of all its cookies and other confections

and can accurately track their movements with the Easy WMS. This capability is essential for a food manufacturer like Fortwenger.

**Omnichannel-ready logistics processes**

Integrating Fortwenger’s physical and digital sales channels — supported by automated logistics operations — has enhanced the customer experience. “Our goal is to continue developing and sharing delicious products beyond the Alsace region. This involves continuously improving our e-commerce operations. Our omnichannel strategy is fully supported thanks to the logistics solutions from Mecalux, whom we’ve been working with for many years,” says Schmitt.