

Mecalux and Iberfrasa: a journey towards logistics excellence

Iberfrasa, a manufacturer of personal care products, has been optimizing its logistics operations with Mecalux storage and internal transport solutions for over two decades.

Country: **Spain** | Sector: **cosmetics and personal care**



CHALLENGES

- Ensure a **continuous flow** of goods between production and shipping.
- **Connect** the manufacturing plant and the warehouse, separated by a public street.
- **Adapt** logistics operations to the company's evolving needs on an ongoing basis.

SOLUTIONS

- **Automated Pallet Shuttle with a stacker crane.**
- **Automated clad-rack warehouse for pallets.**
- **Transfer car and automatic pallet conveyors.**
- **Easy WMS warehouse management system.**
- **Semi-automated Pallet Shuttle system.**
- **Pallet racks.**

BENEFITS

- Warehouse prepared to handle more than **110 million products** packaged annually.
- **Automatic transfer** of products between production and the warehouse via an 82-foot-long raised tunnel.
- Logistics operations modernized with **automated storage systems** for over two decades.

Iberfrasa is a prominent Spanish manufacturer of cosmetics, personal care products, textiles, and household items. Thanks to its highly qualified team and the incorporation of the latest technological innovations, the company has raised its productivity over the past few years. Iberfrasa's top priorities are to offer quality products and adapt to market demands. Over time, it has successfully expanded its presence in both the domestic and international markets, establishing itself as a benchmark in its sector.

» **Founded: 1984**

» **Facilities: 9.9+ acres**

Iberfrasa is the leading manufacturer of personal and home hygiene products in its sector in Spain. "We specialize in manufacturing personal care items, perfumes, air fresheners, and household cleaning products. We supply all the Spanish distribution channels and a large part of the European ones. We've been marketing our own brands for over 35 years, and we're present in over 30 countries," says Julián Bricio, Operations Manager at Iberfrasa.

Since it opened its doors a decade ago, the logistics center in Quintanar de la Orden (Spain) has been expanded on numerous occasions to keep pace with the increase in production activity. "In recent years, manufacturing has gone up by around 25%. We sell 80% of our output nationally and export the remaining portion," says Bricio.

In expanding and modernizing its facilities, Iberfrasa has consistently partnered with Mecalux to find the best logistics solution. "We've been working with Mecalux for over 20 years. We've continued to rely on them because they always carry out projects in line with the deadlines set," says Bricio.

In the early stages, Iberfrasa outfitted its logistics center with an automated storage and

retrieval system (AS/RS) for 2,632 pallets and the semi-automated Pallet Shuttle for finished products. Despite being expanded several times over the years, Iberfrasa's facility became too small in the face of its high production volume, a sign of the business's success. As a result, the company decided to install an AS/RS connected to the production lines.

In terms of Iberfrasa's growth plans Bricio says: "Our future lies in making decisions that help us adapt our operations to clients'

requirements. Meeting this goal means ensuring that our logistics processes are streamlined and safe."

Iberfrasa's decided to install an automated warehouse next to the existing one. The new AS/RS has the capacity to house the more than 110 million packaged products the company produces yearly. Easy WMS, the warehouse management system from Mecalux, oversees all AS/RS operations. It manages pallets from their arrival from the manufacturing zone to their transfer to the shipping

area. The Iberfrasa facilities posed another logistics challenge: the two AS/RS — one for the production line output and the other for the storage zone — are located in two different buildings separated by a public road. To speed up the internal movement of goods and connect both warehouses, Mecalux built an 82-foot-long raised tunnel spanning the street. Palletized merchandise circulates autonomously along a pallet conveyor system. Thanks to this solution, Iberfrasa's operations are completely automated, from the minute the pallets containing finished goods leave





“We chose Mecalux once again for this project because we have complete confidence in it. With the new warehouse, we can store a large number of SKUs and continue providing our clients with top-notch service.”

Julián Bricio
Operations Manager, Iberfrasa

production to their arrival in the shipping area.

“We have modern facilities for manufacturing, storing, and distributing all our household cleaning and personal care products. Building these automated warehouses will support us in achieving our current and future objectives,” says Bricio.

Automated warehouse for finished goods

Standing 93.5' tall, Iberfrasa's new AS/RS has a capacity for 7,791 pallets with finished products, each weighing up to 1,984 lb. The warehouse is a rack-supported building. That is, its structure is formed by the pallet racks themselves, which also serve as the storage system.

The new facility is made up of two 226-foot-long aisles. Each features a different storage system with a common goal: to boost productivity while optimizing space. In one aisle, Mecalux set up double-deep pallet racking. This system provides greater storage capacity by housing two pallets per location. To handle the goods, the stacker crane operating in the aisle incorporates telescopic forks, which can reach the pallet in the second racking position. In the other aisle, Mecalux installed the Automated

Pallet Shuttle with a stacker crane. In this high-density AS/RS, a motor-driven shuttle can store up to six pallets deep in each channel, one behind the other.

In addition to increasing its storage capacity, Iberfrasa has leveraged automation to streamline and maintain stricter control over incoming and outgoing goods. “We manage a large number of SKUs of personal care items, fragrances, air fresheners, and household cleaning products. Our priority is to minimize loading and unloading times as much as possible to improve deliveries to our clients,” says Bricio.

The conveyors are essential for the automated warehouse to operate at peak performance. They move finished goods from production and transport the pallets ordered by clients to the outfeed stations. The shipping area is equipped with a transfer car that distributes and sorts pallets across 15 exits with gravity flow conveyors.

Easy WMS assigns a conveyor to each pallet according to its order or destination. For example, pallets to be distributed along the same route will be placed on the same conveyor. By optimally organizing its shipping area, Iberfrasa now distributes its products faster and without errors.

Easy WMS: the warehouse Mastermind

Easy WMS communicates continuously with Iberfrasa's Dynamics 365 ERP system to streamline product management and optimize warehouse processes. "Integrating Easy WMS with our ERP system has been key for monitoring all stock-related information," says Bricio. The two programs communicate with each other to ensure that operations run smoothly. They coordinate the movements of merchandise from the moment it leaves the manufacturing area until it is distributed to clients.

The ERP informs Easy WMS in advance of which finished goods will enter the warehouse from production. This way, they are quickly assigned a location. Merchandise arrives from the manufacturing center stretch-wrapped and labeled. The Mecalux software identifies the pallets as they cross the checkpoint, verifying whether they meet the requirements established for storage. Knowing the status of the goods in real time helps the company minimize errors.

Once the pallets are recorded in the system, Easy WMS applies an optimal slotting strategy to each. It does this based on a series of calculations considering the number of empty locations, the SKU, and the demand level.

Racks that complement automation

Along with various AS/RS, several areas of the Iberfrasa center are outfitted with the semi-automated Pallet Shuttle. Products are managed following the FIFO (first in, first out) strategy.

The cosmetics company has also installed pallet racks to house finished goods and raw materials. Iberfrasa opted for this system because it offers direct access to items while expediting product management and order picking. Pallet racks facilitate inventory control, as each location is allocated to the same SKU.

More than 20 years of logistics synergy

The more than two decades of cooperation between Iberfrasa and Mecalux underscore how innovative, personalized storage solutions can transform a company's logistics operations. This synergy has enabled Iberfrasa to boost operations, enhance efficiency, and decisively overcome market challenges.

Automation provides accurate control over inflows and outflows of personal care and household cleaning products

