

## Case study: Ectra

### Multiple SKUs in a sectored warehouse

Country: France



Logistics operator Ectra has commissioned a new 9,000 m<sup>2</sup> distribution centre in the town of Crolles (France). Mecalux has equipped it with pallet racks and a three-level mezzanine with shelving for picking. The warehouse is divided into sectors to organise more than 30,000 SKUs and meet Seveso safety regulations (essential in centres where chemical products are handled). This facility is notable for having an agile and efficient operation that guarantees the timely delivery of products to its customers.

### Logistics for all types of companies

Founded more than 30 years ago in France, Ectra provides logistics services to many different companies, mainly in the pharmaceutical, chemical and technological sectors. It manages a wide variety of products at this centre, ranging from very bulky to small and delicate items.

Ectra is constantly updated with the aim of improving its processes and continuing to grow. *"We have a lot of experience and expertise in logistics, so we offer a modern and efficient service to our customers. We look to the future with optimism and hope to enter new markets very soon,"* says Jean-Baptiste Nicola, Managing Director of Ectra. To meet its growth prospects, the company has just opened a new distribution centre in the town of

Crolles (in eastern France). With an area of 9,000 m<sup>2</sup>, it accommodates a greater number of products while also having extra space with which to expand its customer portfolio.

### A sectored warehouse

A logistics operator like Ectra, with an enormous number of product entries and exits each day, needs flexible facilities. They must be designed to facilitate the handling of goods (in its new warehouse it manages more than 30,000 SKUs from different customers) while also offering a large storage capacity.

Ectra has allocated virtually all the space in its new warehouse to the products (both finished and raw materials) of one of its main customers: a technology and elec-

trical components company. It also stores chemicals that require safe treatment.

To better organise this variety of SKUs, Ectra has sectored the warehouse. In each zone, it stores either a single customer's products or goods with similar characteristics, such as IBC containers (for storing and transporting liquids).

With this compartmentalisation, Ectra complies with the Seveso regulations concerning the safety of industrial installations where chemical products are handled. For this reason, the space has been divided into five independent chambers closed with roller doors.

### Efficient management of goods

The logistics operator needed a storage solution that would suit the specific needs of its business.

This is the third warehouse that Mecalux has equipped for Ectra, after installing pallet racks in Saint Clair du Rhône in 2010, and Moirans in 2011. *"In the new centre, Mecalux was present from the design phase onwards and proposed different solutions to suit our requirements and the space we had,"* explains Jean-Baptiste Nicola.

The warehouse consists of 10 m high pallet racks with a total storage capacity of 8,250 pallets. The levels are made up of



### Jean-Baptiste Nicola Managing Director of Ectra

*"We are very satisfied with the throughput of our warehouse. What we value most is the durability of the racking; that is, we are confident that our business will evolve in the future and that the racking will adapt easily to new operations."*



electro-welded mesh shelves, which guarantee greater stability for the loads and prevent material from accidentally falling. *"We thought the cost-estimate was reasonable, although what really caught our attention with this solution was the capacity it provided us,"* notes the Managing Director.

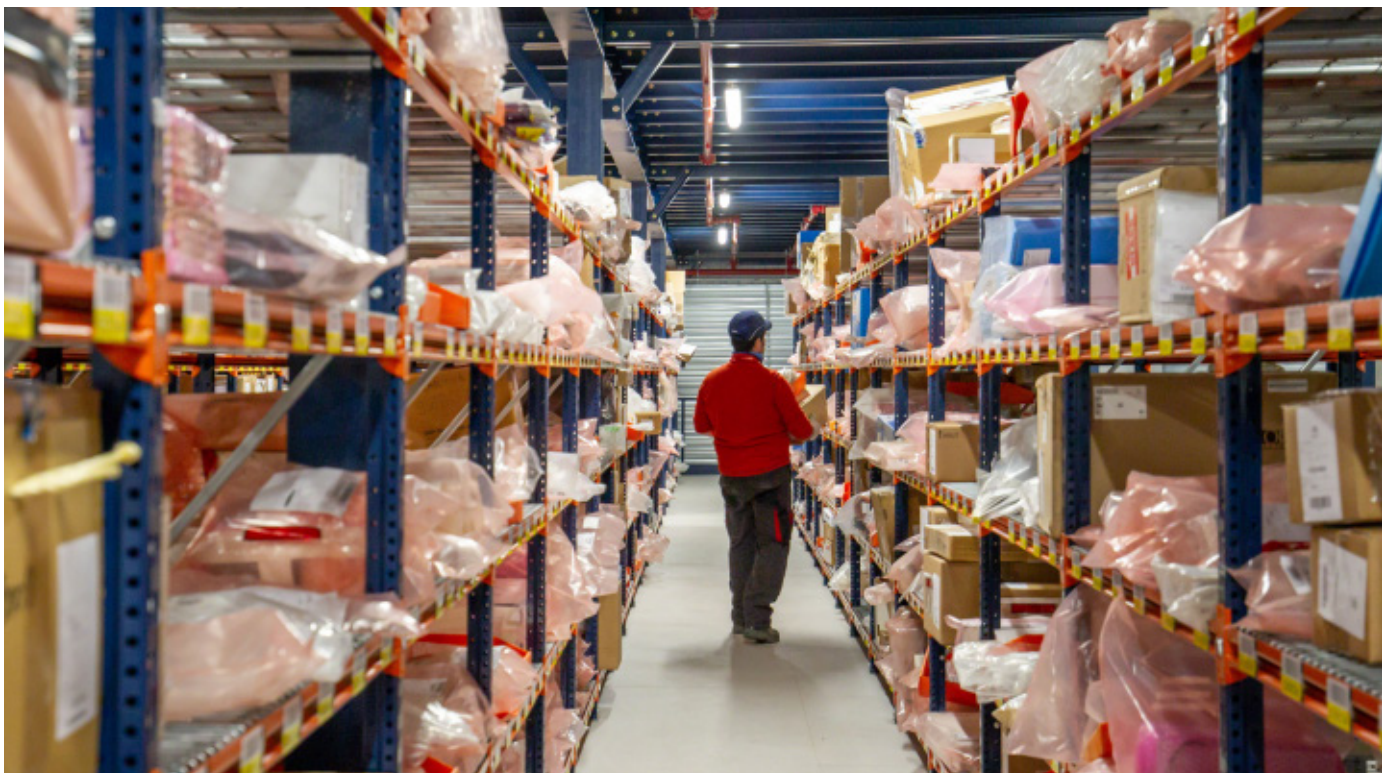
Mecalux has also installed a 7 m high mezzanine with three levels, each of which is equipped with shelves for picking. This solution takes advantage of the building's height and has tripled the area dedicated to storage, accommodating a greater number of products.

Each level of the mezzanine corresponds to a sector and is assigned certain products and a number of picking operators, which can vary depending on demand and the number of orders being prepared.

Operators move along the storage aisles, locating each order's items. They follow the order grouping method, which consists of preparing several orders at the same time on a single route. Subsequently, in the consolidation area, each order's products are separated and sorted, then checked, packaged and shipped.



The efficient organisation of the goods has contributed to improving the productivity of all operations and, as a result, to supplying Ectra's customers on time



## Safety and good management

With Mecalux's storage systems, Ectra manages its customers' goods with error-free efficiency and in complete safety. Both pallet racks and picking shelves

provide direct access to products, which is essential for operators to move items in and out of their slots quickly. Ectra has a well-leveraged warehouse, with storage solutions that optimise surface area and

height. Not only has it gained in storage capacity, but it has also improved its customer service. Sectoring has been essential for organising more than 30,000 SKUs whilst also meeting Seveso safety regulations.



### Advantages for Ectra

- **Excellent use of space:** pallet racks and the mezzanine optimise every available millimetre for the purpose of gaining storage capacity.
- **Layout of the goods:** a certain type of product is deposited in each warehouse sector. Efficient organisation results in better throughput from operators.
- **Warehouse security:** the warehouse is sectored into five independent chambers with roller doors.



### Technical data

Storage capacity	8,250 pallets
Pallet sizes	800/1,200 x 1,200 mm
Max. pallet weight	1,300 kg
Rack height	10 m

