

Customer testimonial
BRICOLUX - Belgium



Thanks to the **Scallog robots**, wholesaler **Bricolux** is getting ready for the back-to-school rush in French-speaking Belgium in three months tops!



As Alain Collard, CEO of Belgian company BRICOLUX, explains:

"Our logistics are agile and high-performing, as exemplified by our increase in turnover, from €3m to €7m. Logistics are key to accelerating our growth."

As a school and educational materials wholesaler, over 70% of our sales are made over a three-month period, with the September back-to-school window serving as our deadline."

He adds that: **“** Scallog's Goods-to-Man solution now allows us to spread our logistics over the summer period to ensure we're up to the task of delivering to over 2,000 French-speaking schools in Belgium and Luxembourg from 16 August on, and no later than 1 September. **”**





Bricolux: taking things further

A school and educational materials wholesaler since 1973, Bricolux is a leading household name in the education and childhood sectors in French-speaking Belgium and Luxembourg.

For 47 years now, every Easter the family-run Belgian company publishes and distributes **three catalogues that showcase its wide range of over 8,000 products** aimed at professionals working with children.

 **8000**
References

With a print run of over **13,000 copies**, Bricolux's main catalogue features an extensive selection of products, spanning everything from **school supplies to arts and crafts and furniture**.

This main catalogue sits side-by-side with a catalogue given over to **educational games** from the publisher **Nathan**, for which **Bricolux is the exclusive distributor in French-speaking Belgium**, and a third catalogue aimed at **early childhood professionals**.

From April to June, **80% of all orders are placed online by professionals**. They are then delivered before 1 September.

80%


In terms of public procurement contracts, over **2,000 Belgian and Luxembourgish schools** draw on Bricolux's experience, energy, and offer to provide their pupils with the supplies, notebooks, and equipment needed for their first day back at school.

 **2000**
Schools

Having clocked in **50 orders per day during lockdown**, Bricolux's online store is drawing in a new profile of customers in ever increasing numbers: **individuals**.

Adding over 1,000 new Fine Art and Nursery products to its range, diversifying its customer base, and providing excellent service throughout the year are just some of the many selling points Bricolux puts forward to professionals working with children, its traditional target market.

The brand is choosing to focus on these driving forces to ensure its turnover continues to grow. These growth factors rely on **agile, high-performing intralogistics** in which order preparation plays a key role!



Bricolux's intralogistics needed to evolve in order to withstand peak periods and to meet customers' expectations and diversity in the orders they place.

From warehouse management to order preparation optimisation, logistical efficiency and agility are key factors in ensuring Bricolux **keeps personal and business customers satisfied and coming back for more.**

Other peak periods are thrown into the mix too, such as **Christmas**, and **Saint Nicholas Day**, which accounts for **10% of Bricolux's turnover** as sales of educational games rocket.

In order to build lasting customer loyalty, the wholesaler also wanted to **guarantee B2B customers next-day delivery throughout the year for their replenishment orders.**

Alongside this, Bricolux aimed to **improve its online store logistics to attract more B2C customers.** The latter account for **2% to 3% of all orders** and expect delivery timeframes that align with their needs.

By improving warehouse logistics performances, the brand aimed to boost personal customers' average spend **by €25 while keeping them satisfied.**



In light of **labour shortages that restricted their ability to hire temp staff**, Bricolux saw its **1,200 m² warehouse reach saturation** (in terms of surface and volume).

Already well versed in **controlled innovation**, in autumn 2019 the company embarked on a search for the best technological compromise that would solve its logistics issues and help it fulfil its ambitions.



As **Alain Collard** explains, a technological solution was needed, and quickly:

“ We saw Scallop's robotic Goods-to-Man solution as being the most effective, efficient, and pragmatic way of upgrading our logistics and continuing to grow.

Small and medium-sized businesses often wrongly assume that robots are inaccessible, because they are expensive and complex to roll out. Our work in this area proves the opposite is true. ”





From PoC to the logistics (r)evolution at Bricolux

When it came to choosing Scallog's Goods-to-Man robotic solution, what stood out for Bricolux was the ability to **test the solution "in the field" in order to get to grips with the technology, win employees over, and demonstrate the solution's benefits in a tangible manner.**

In the context of this **PoC** (Proof of Concept) process, in November 2019 Bricolux opted for the **Scallog Starter Kit**, which includes **an automated order preparation workstation featuring 20 mobile shelf units, and three Bobby robots** to transport the units to the operators.

Starter Kit 

3 Bobby Robots 

20 Mobile shelves 

1 Station 

Setting up the Scallog robotic zone within the Bricolux warehouse triggered **an overhaul in how the picking and packing processes were structured and organised.**

Concretely speaking, it meant setting up **new practices and a new packing zone in the warehouse to streamline flows, bolster operators' productivity, and reduce the amount of moving around they are required to do.**

Laying out the robotic zone, interfacing with the **ERP Merkato**, integrating the **2,500 products, overhauling the packing zone: in six months**, a number of changes were implemented.

Initially scheduled for **20 March**, the launch of the Goods-to-Man robotic process was postponed to **15 May**. As a result of the pandemic, the Scallog solution was immediately put to work in supporting Bricolux's spike in activity. As **Alain Collard** puts it,

“ As a result of our efforts, this Goods-to-Man robotic solution led to a transformation in how our warehouse is now organised. It has revolutionised 40 years of practices in logistics.

The goal was to increase speed of execution in order to meet our personal and business customers' new needs and standards.”



Instant benefits in increasing logistical agility and efficiency

Thanks to Scallog's Goods-to-Man robotic solution, merchandise is transported to the operators by robots. This solution has optimised **the entire order preparation process at the Bricolux warehouse, rendering it faster and more seamless from start to finish.**

In the Scallog zone, working out of the stationary area, the operators select **medium- to low-turnover** products directly from the mobile shelf units moved around by the Bobby robots.

This allows them to simultaneously prepare **48 order boxes**, all with "one day's advance". These boxes are then added to by other operators equipped with tablets and carts, who pick high-turnover products in the aisles.

The products are then transported to the packing zone to be palletised and filmed by school. This picking process lends Bricolux **greater responsiveness and an efficient order preparation process, notably during peak periods.**

 **<10 kilometers**
per day

Another advantage of opting for a Goods-to-Man robotics solution is that **the drudgery of the work required is reduced.**

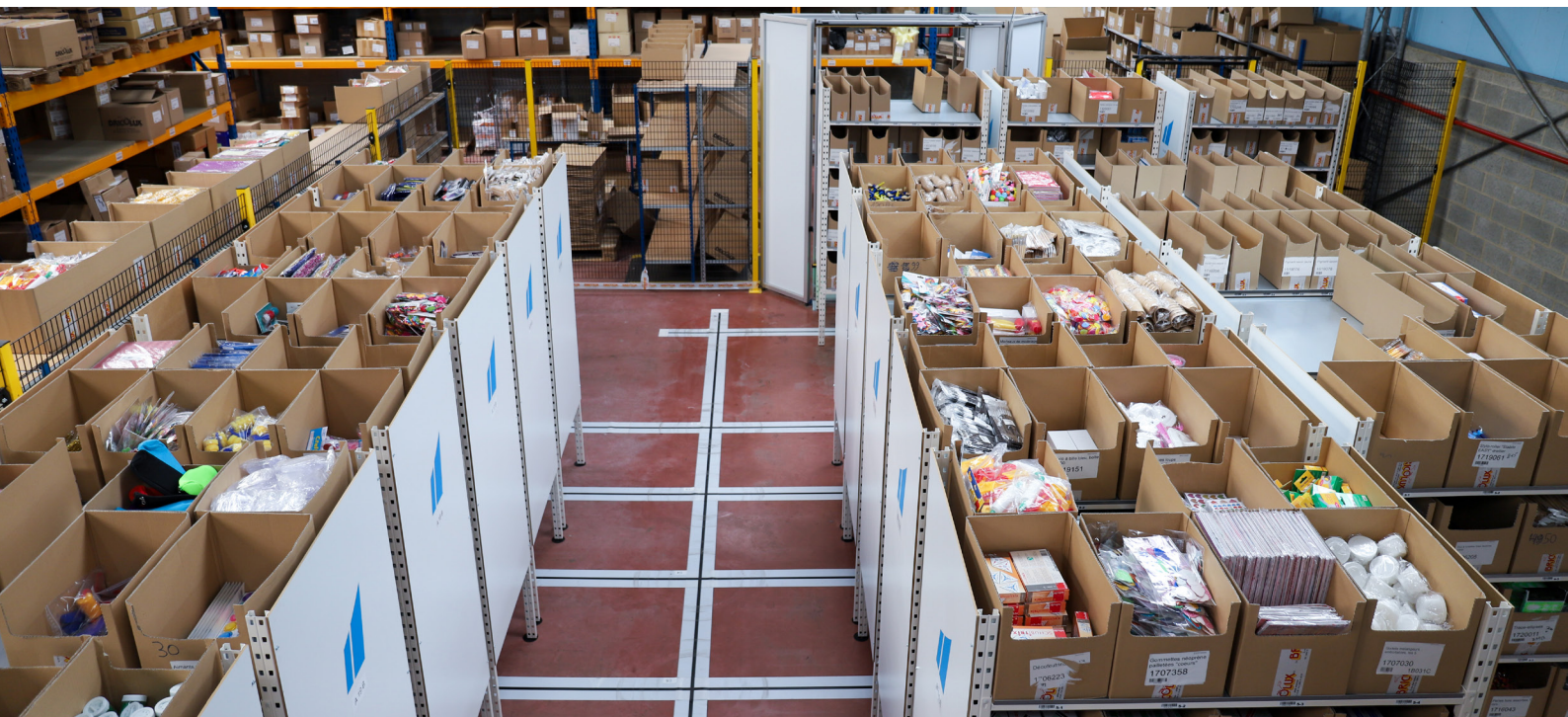
The ground operators are required to cover has dropped to just five or six kilometres a day. In contrast to the **14 or 16 kilometres they once covered**, manual picking now results in less than 10 kilometres per day. The goal is to decrease this to around five kilometres a day within the next few months.

0,5% 

In addition, there has been a **drastic reduction in error rates in order preparation.**

In just a handful of weeks, estimates dropped from **4% to 0.5%**. The Scallog order preparation workstation includes a **spot-to-light** pointer that accompanies operators in their tasks, from **order picking to item scanning.**

The order buffer rack, meanwhile, is equipped with **put to light** indicators that ensure meticulous control over the **quantities selected**, particularly for school supplies such as loose pencils and rubbers.





The Scallog solution's "automated storage" feature has improved Bricolux's **stock management, making it more precise and responsive.**

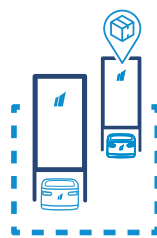
Medium- and low-turnover products are optimised via a **continuous inventory**, and dynamic storage is optimised via sections defined by Scallog's **smart software.**

Last but not least, another benefit inherent to the Scallog robotic solution is **the ease with which it can be integrated.** Designed to be 100% intuitive, **an hour or two of training** is all that is needed for operators, both experienced and beginners, to get up and running effectively at a Scallog order preparation workstation.

This is a key point when you consider that Bricolux hires **around fifty students as back-up** for its **peak periods in July and August.**



Alain Collard adds:



“ The Goods-to-Man solution perfectly aligns with our needs in terms of saving space, and optimising speed and quality in preparing our orders.

Our two logistics teams work back-to-back from 6:00am to 8:00pm, and now enjoy optimised organisational structure and processes that are more efficient, resulting in a better level of service.

With this in mind, in order to save yet more space and boost productivity further, we now want to have as many products as possible in the Scallog automated zone.”

Impressed by these initial results, in the coming months Belgian distributor Bricolux has decided to **take things further in automating the Goods-to-Man process, by tripling its Scallog warehouse zone in size and potentially hiring extra Bobby robots during peak periods.**

“ Incorporating and expanding the Goods-to-Man robotic solution within our SME should allow us to **bolster turnover without making staff cuts,**”

according to **Alain Collard.** //





**THINK BIG, START SMALL,
SCALE FAST!**

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SCALABLE LOGISTICS

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