

## Case Study: Boland

Logistics centralisation to bolster an omnichannel strategy

Country: Netherlands



**Boland, a Dutch costume and party accessory company, has centralised its logistics operations in a new warehouse in Bleiswijk (Netherlands) to boost the online growth it has seen in recent years. Mecalux has equipped it with pallet racking providing storage capacity for 26,328 pallets. This enables Boland to meet a key logistics objective: to ship online orders to its customers within 12 hours.**

### Celebrating more than 50 years

Founded in 1970, Boland is a Dutch company that distributes fancy dress costumes and party supplies throughout Europe. Its catalogue includes 5,000 plus SKUs of products to celebrate any occasion.

Boland already had two facilities from which it distributed products to customers. However, it needed more space to be able to accommodate new merchandise. Logistics Manager Niels Balvert says: "We lacked storage capacity."

Another challenge facing Boland was how to efficiently manage goods in two different warehouses. One of the facilities stored 14,000 pallets and the other, 4,000. The firm entertained opening a third warehouse, but it was concerned about a critical issue for its business: "complicating logistics operations even more."

Therefore, Boland decided to open a new facility in Bleiswijk where it could bring all its logistics operations together under one roof while strengthening its omnichannel

strategy. The 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> warehouse houses all of Boland's goods. Balvert says: "By going from having two facilities down to just one, we've gained in efficiency. And we're convinced this will help us to grow in the future."

### Agility and direct access

Boland sought a storage solution tailored to its wide range of products of varying sizes, characteristics and turnovers. To that end, Balvert explains that the company contacted Mecalux due to "the compet-

itive price of its storage solutions and the sound advice its team gave us.”

Mecalux proposed installing pallet racking, an ideal solution for housing a large number of pallets containing many different SKUs. One of its main advantages is its adaptability to any type of load, weight and volume.

Almost the entire surface area of the warehouse is made up of 10-metre-tall pallet racks. The facility is outfitted with 25 aisles measuring up to 77-metres-long and pallet racks housing 26,328 pallets.

The warehouse operations themselves are very simple: to receive the pallets sent by suppliers in Asia and Europe, store them and prepare orders to be distributed as soon as possible to customers all around Europe. Nevertheless, this requires optimal organisation to prevent mistakes and delays.

The racks offer direct access to the products, which greatly streamlines goods management and order picking. This is fundamental for preparing and shipping online orders in 12 hours or less. “Picking



**Niels Balvert**  
Logistics Manager, Boland

*“We’re thrilled with our new warehouse; it’s really well designed. The pallet racks make the most of the available space and enable us to accommodate our broad and varied assortment of items, with differing sizes and weights.”*

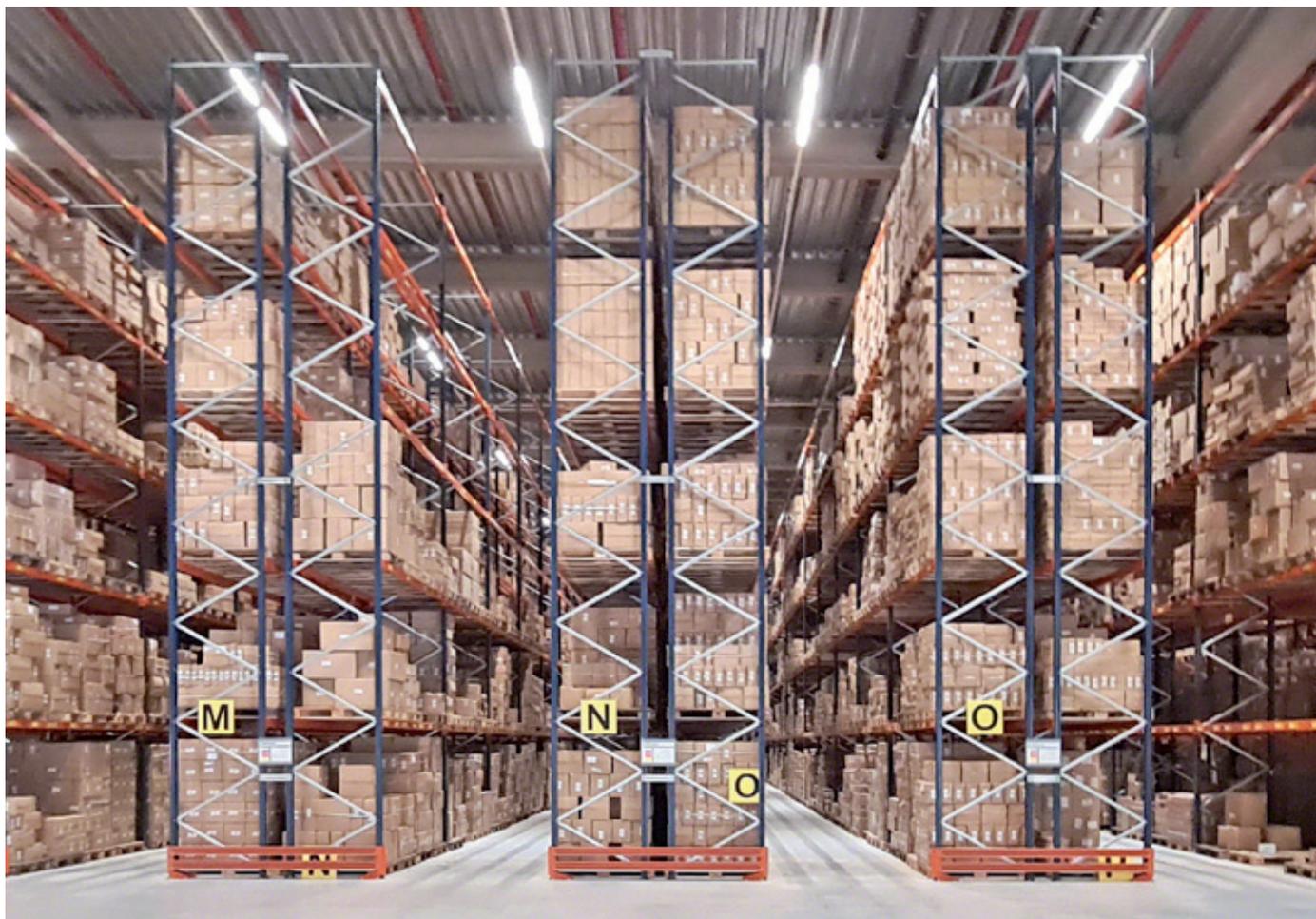
is one of the main operations in our warehouse, so the storage system needs to facilitate it,” says Balvert.

In the aisles, high-bay order pickers are used for picking. The operators stand in a cabin that is lifted along with the load. From there, they pick the items that make up each order directly from the racks.

“We’re really happy with how order picking turned out because the racks make the work of the operators much easier. Our staff works with voice picking systems, and our operators are now 10% faster,” says Balvert.

#### **Whistling while it works**

Boland has completely overhauled its supply chain to adapt to the challenges of omnichannel retail. By concentrating all its logistics operations in a single space, it can manage all its products efficiently while reducing operating costs. Proof of this is that, despite the difficulties brought on by the coronavirus, the company has not stopped serving its customers. Boland’s top priority is to gain momentum and continue offering products for celebrations to both physical shops and online users. And the pallet racking allows the company to ensure the total availability of its goods.





### Advantages for Boland

- **Centralised logistics:** Boland has brought all its goods, previously spread out among two facilities, into one space. This guarantees that all processes are much better organised, eliminating delays and errors.
- **Direct access:** the racks provide direct access to 26,328 pallets, enough capacity for supplying Boland's customers throughout Europe.
- **Efficient picking:** the operators work with high-bay order pickers to prepare all the orders. The racks make their work easier.



### Technical data

Storage capacity	26,328 pallets
Pallet size	800 x 1,200 mm
Max. pallet weight	275 kg
Racking height	10 m
Aisle length	77 m

