

MARKS & SPENCER

Shifting expectations

Marks & Spencer is a household name in the United Kingdom. Its offering of high-quality food, clothing and home products draws over 21 million shoppers weekly to its stores. The Norbert Dentressangle Group is a key player in M&S's logistics operation – and especially in supporting its fast-growing e-commerce business.



Darrell Stein
IT and Logistics Director

When Darrell Stein joined Marks & Spencer as IT Director in 2006, he came full circle. Sixteen years earlier, he had begun his career with the quintessentially British retailer before stints at Mars, Ernst & Young and latterly Vodafone, where he was UK IT Director. In his first 18 months back at M&S, the forthright

39-year-old has completely restructured the IT function to service the Group's internal market faster.

Unlocking potential

It's a measure of his impact that he was shortlisted for Computing's IT Leader of the Year award in 2007 and 2008. In his first year, wrote the UK magazine, *"M&S's expectations of IT [were] redefined. The board of M&S now recognises IT as an innovative and*

expert partner, supporting the group's overall business plan."

In March 2008, Stein was also handed responsibility for logistics. Whereas logistics partners were previously used to execute M&S's ideas, the new chief wants more for his money – good news for the Norbert Dentressangle Group, which is seizing the opportunity to

provide ideas and demonstrate its expertise. In a nutshell, to unlock previously-unexploited potential.

Highly collaborative

Besides running nearly half of Marks & Spencer's general-merchandise logistics, the Norbert Dentressangle Group is the sole logistics partner for M&S Direct, the retailer's online – and fastest-growing – business. In 2007-08, it accounted for £200m in sales, putting it on-track to reach its target of £500m in online sales by 2010-11.

In tandem with M&S, Norbert Dentressangle is currently developing a national e-commerce distribution facility. The Group is involved to a high degree: it has done the initial design work, project communications and terms & conditions drafting, and run the tendering process with handling-equipment providers.

"Norbert Dentressangle has injected a lot of pace into the e-commerce project, and been an upfront and highly collaborative partner," says Darrell Stein. Marks & Spencer's international business is also developing strongly, with sales up almost 24.5% in 2007-08 and its 290-store network set to expand. With Norbert Dentressangle now completing its global jigsaw, the provider is optimistic, it is well-placed to support the retailer's ambitions for international growth.



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Serving M&S customers in-store and on-line

The Norbert Dentressangle Group's partnership with Marks & Spencer dates back to the 1980s. The Group currently runs the retailer's logistics in the general-merchandise area: three regional distribution centres, and a national DC for three trading categories (cards & gifts, bedding, jewellery). The Group also operates all of Marks & Spencer's e-commerce logistics: storage plus pick, pack and despatch (PPD).