

Marks and Spencer

From the biggest store to your doorstep

Over the past five years, high street retailers have increasingly turned to e-commerce as an integral part of a multi-channel offer.

Marks and Spencer is the UK's leading retailer of clothing, food and home products. Their e-commerce offer encompasses 150,000 different items, enabling customers to shop at the largest Marks and Spencer store without leaving their home. In 2009, Norbert Dentressangle dispatched 23 million single items.

"E-commerce logistic requirements are streets apart from those of high street deliveries," explains Jason Keegan, Head of General Merchandise Logistics, Marks and Spencer. *"In retailing, presentation is handled on arrival, as our concern is how the product will look on the shop-floor. With e-commerce, products have to be packed and delivered in a way that delights our customers. We also offer special gift wrapping options including a personal message. And all of this has to be fulfilled within 48 hours!"*

Part of the customer's team

E-commerce orders are also technically demanding. *"They have to be released in batches that take into account postcodes,"* says Jason Keegan. *"This information is relayed to a carrier management system, which in-turn allows us to find the most cost-efficient way of delivering each order."* Marks and Spencer use their own information systems with all of their suppliers, running acceptance tests to find the right solution for a joint-user system. *"A logistics partner should be in tune with their customer's business objectives and see themselves as part of the customer's team,"* adds Jason Keegan. *"We are very happy with what Norbert Dentressangle do for us. We feel that they have understood the Marks and Spencer culture."*

- Started life 125 years ago as a penny bazaar in Leeds.
- 21 million UK customers.
- Present in 40 territories.
 - 78,000 people.
 - 2,000 suppliers.
- Brand values: Quality, Value, Service, Innovation and Trust.

“Norbert Dentressangle brought in 3 or 4 experts in the e-commerce field to lead the partnership with Marks and Spencer. It is important to have people who understand the service ethic. When you shop in-store you see what you’re paying for, but an e-commerce customer has already paid for the goods leaving the warehouse.”

Jason Keegan,
Head of General Merchandise Logistics,
Marks and Spencer.

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Norbert Dentressangle provide a campus solution at the Marks and Spencer Regional Distribution Centre at Warrington, Cheshire. Hardwick Grange RDC has a dedicated area for e-commerce stock. Orders are picked and then transferred to the Woolston packing and despatch facility in another part of the campus. Recent changes in the site includes a full site mezzanine floor of 80,000 sq ft (7,400 sq m), conveyor systems and major improvements to the IT infrastructure. This has ensured the capacity to handle growth over the coming years. There is a pool of 150-200 core staff which can increase to 700 over busy periods such as Christmas or the summer sales.

