



Coop's order-picking productivity increased 100% by introducing *NDC Pick-n-Go*[®]

Coop, a Swedish retailer, has doubled their order-picking productivity by implementing *NDC Pick-n-Go* at their main distribution center, located in Bro outside Stockholm.

The traditional vehicle based order-picking processes include many unproductive steps, such as picking up empty pallets or roller containers and delivering filled pallets, as well as stepping up and down from the vehicle and actually driving it. *NDC Pick-n-Go* from Kollmorgen is a system solution that makes order-picking more efficient at the same time as it improves the ergonomics for the picker. The *Pick-n-Go* truck automatically escorts the picker and is always optimally positioned to minimize the distance and effort needed to pick and place products on the waiting pallet, resulting in reduced operator stress and improved picking productivity.


Coop is the second largest retailer in Sweden with some 700 outlets, convenience stores, super- and hypermarkets. At their terminal in Bro, which is the largest grocery distribution center in northern Europe, handling 3,500 EUR pallets a day and 4,000 containers and 65,000,000 packages a year, they had operating cost and capacity problems. After a careful evaluation process the *Pick-n-Go* concept was selected to drive several picking process improvements:

- Reduce picker time spent on unproductive tasks and time consuming interruptions by 50%, and thus
- improve picker productivity by 100%, leading to
- a significant reduction of operating costs and
- an increase in capacity

Sune Montonen, Warehouse Manager, says: "Coop now has a leadership position in Intra-Logistics. We selected *NDC Pick-n-Go* to gain immediate and measurable productivity improvements. We evaluated fully automated and mechanized solutions but found them too costly and inflexible in comparison to *NDC Pick-n-Go*."

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Coop today operate 32 Pick-n-Go trucks, with a second, larger, phase underway. The project integrated the Pick-n-Go system with the existing Pick-by-Voice solution from Vocollect Inc. installed by their partner Zetes Industries. The productivity gains are in addition to the improvements from the Pick-by-Voice solution. It is the combination and integration of two mature technologies that are the core of the innovation. Pick-by-Voice mainly addresses picking quality and the AGV technology mainly addresses the productivity challenge. This is teamwork at its best. To gain full potential, man and machine – the picker and the truck – must work together smoothly and synchronized - as a team.

The automated warehouse trucks are supplied by Kollmorgen's partner Toyota Material Handling Sweden (BT trucks) and integrated seamlessly with Coop's fleet of approximately 400 BT trucks. The service for the automated trucks is managed under the existing service agreement.

NDC Pick-n-Go is built on the standard NDC8 AGV controls package, comprising three main blocks:

- Stationary software for efficient route planning and traffic management of the fleet of trucks as well as seamless integration with the existing warehouse management system (WMS)
- Tools for continuous optimization of utilization and performance
- Mobile controls (hardware and software) for safe automation of a standard warehouse truck
- A complete software tool-kit for engineering, installation and service

Kollmorgen's AGV control solutions are applied in more than 14,000 trucks around the globe. The company's laser-navigation platform is already successfully guiding well over 7,000 AGVs from destination to destination.

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