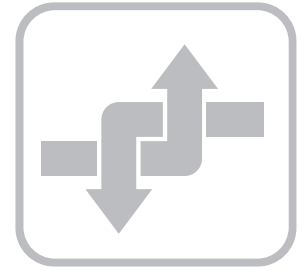


# Additional turbo engaged for the e-commerce business



## BRACK.CH relies on Stöcklin's high performance, future-safe intralogistics solution

**Stöcklin Logistik AG has completed a prestige property for the online merchant BRACK.CH, part of the Competec Group, in Willisau in the canton of Lucerne. It has attracted a great deal of public interest. CHF 70 million were invested in developing the existing property into one of the most up-to-date logistics centers in Europe. Maximum availability and the shortest delivery times are guaranteed for a product range of over 200,000 articles. The core of the expansion is a medium parts warehouse with almost 100,000 places and a likewise fully-automated eight-lane pallet warehouse in which one lane is explicitly configured as cassette storage.**

When it became evident that expanding the Competec logistics

center in Willisau was unavoidable, coronavirus was still far off. Consequently, the expansion plans did not originally owe anything to the e-commerce boom spurred by the pandemic. Rather, they were due to the rapid development of all of the trading companies in the Competec Group. In addition, the online merchant BRACK.CH had recognized the signs of the times early on and successfully turned to the Internet and e-commerce. More than 200,000 products - from tiny USB sticks to complete party tents - are in stock and delivered to over 1.2 million private and business customers. The multiple prize-winning online shop offers you shopping experiences in six worlds: IT & Multimedia. Hardware Store & Hobby, Household & Living, Supermarket & Drugstore, Family & Baby and Sport & Leisure - each

with novelties, best sellers, campaigns, information and services.

### Decades-long partnership redesigned

The success story of the Swiss trading company began in 1994, initiated as a sole proprietorship by Roland Brack, who is also the founder and owner of Competec. The Swiss e-commerce specialist has been present in Willisau in Lucerne since 2011. It was there that the previous LEGO plant, one of the production locations of the bright cult building blocks, was converted into a partially-automated logistics center. Since then, it has been in productive use. However, continuing growth led to the storage space from 2017 in the 55,000 m<sup>2</sup> building becoming increasingly cramped. At the

same time, online customers came to expect fast and more flexible delivery options with an increased product range. As a result, Competec decided to expand the logistics center by 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> and equip it with the latest technology.

The green light for implementation came at the beginning of 2019 when Stöcklin Logistik AG was commissioned as general contractor to install a fully-automated pallet warehouse and medium parts warehouse. „The Swiss intralogistics specialist prevailed with the best solution in the face of international and national competition while also being a long-standing and valued partner of Competec,” reported Thomas Gasser, CEO of Competec Logistik AG. „Stöcklin already built the existing automatic high-bay warehouse in the mid-1990s in the LEGO plant and assisted us in 2011 and 2012 during the retrofit of this installation.”

### **Ad hoc complete expansion instead of phased expansion**

Then coronavirus arrived. The outbreak of the pandemic triggered huge demand for the products offered by BRACK.CH: „During the lockdown, the demand for many existing product ranges, but above all in the new supermarket and drugstore ones, grew disproportionately,” according to Gasser. This upsurge also had to be mastered logistically. In addition, it was necessary to cope with the increased volume requirements created especially by the expansion of the food on offer. This was why Competec decided on the immediate complete expansion of the logistics center to 75,000 m<sup>2</sup> in July 2020. The previous, already impressive CHF 50 million turned into CHF 70 million.

This also demanded flexibility, creativity and manpower from Stöcklin Logistik AG. „Our team was faced with the task of installing a medium parts warehouse with

97,000 storage spaces for trays, a pallet high-bay warehouse with 26,600 storage spaces and cassette storage with 1,330 spaces for large products along with kilometers of conveyance technology in next to no time,” recalled Urs Martin, Sales Director Switzerland/Austria at Stöcklin Logistik AG. This very ambitious project was successfully concluded with the symbolic handover of the keys to the automated full systems in mid-March 2022 to Competec. Its conveyor technology is connected to the existing property in Willisau and assumed operation successively by the end of 2021.

### **Pallet warehouse with customized features**

In a first step, the high-bay pallet warehouse, which is divided into two sectors, began operations. It comprises eight lanes in total. Seven of these are intended to accommodate EURO1 pallets and internal pallets with divergent nominal dimensions of 1,200 x 1,200 mm. Moreover, these load carriers are used in combination with pallet cages. Internal pallets are used in parallel as support for one-way pallets and bulky articles. For this, 26,600 storage spaces with double-deep longitudinal storage are available, which can bear a weight of up to 600 kg. The seven stacker cranes, each almost 34 m height and fitted with double-pronged telescopic forks, produce an overall mechanical output of 215 double cycles per hour if necessary. To achieve this, devices from Stöcklin’s MASTer product series were fitted with two synchronously running drives, which guarantee enhanced acceleration and travel values.



Another lane with 1330 storage spaces is reserved for the storage of (steel) cassettes with the dimensions 3,750x1,200x600/1,200/1,800/2,400 (LxBxH). These are above all intended for interim storage of large products. In order to be able to safely load and transport the cassettes together with their additional load of up to 900 kg, the designers fitted the stacker cranes with specially designed load-handling attachments. The performance of the device is 85 double cycles an hour.

As part of the active fire prevention precautions, the entire pallet high-bay warehouse, erected as a silo, was rendered inert. The reduced oxygen saturation prevents fire even being able to ignite. Moreover, conveyance for all eight lanes of the high-bay warehouse is connected to the incoming and outgoing goods areas. There, 170 pallets are fed into the system circuit per hour or prepared for dispatch.

### **Twenty „BOXer” stacker cranes provide for speed in the medium parts warehouse**

Contrary to the original plan to equip the medium parts warehouse with ten cranes, a decision was taken later to start directly with the full expansion - i.e. with twenty cranes. Consequently, today in the expanded Competec logistics center there are 97,000 single-depth places for plastic trays with a surface area of 660 x 860 mm and up to 50 kg additional load. At peak times, the twenty BOXer stacker cranes achieve an impressive performance of 1,800 double cycles per hour. They are 19 m high and like the stacker cranes in the pallet warehouse, each have a camera system on the raising platform, thus ensuring pre-

cise infeed and discharge of the loading units. The lowest possible emission sound pressure level was also important to Competec/BRACK.CH. „To deal with that on the machine level as far as possible, a technically elaborate solution was implemented with decoupled travel and guide rails, which greatly reduces the oscillations,“ explained Urs Martin.

**„A building like this doesn't get built in Switzerland every day.“**

The just-in-time and just-in-budget implementation is also a tribute to the committed, success-oriented cooperation of the project team of Competec and the intralogistics specialists. This was also the view of Urs Grütter, chairman and management board delegate of Stöcklin Logistik AG: „A milestone was successfully reached.“ Competec's owner, Roland Brack, was also happy at the handover of the keys: „A building like this,

which makes a direct contribution to delivery speed and reliability, doesn't get built in Switzerland every day. We're no longer held back by lack of space and thanks to automated processes, we'll also be in a great position to offer our customers the best customer experience online in the future and to improve the shopping experience yet again.“

**Constant availability with growing product range diversity**

In the past, more than 3.7 million packages were delivered to private, business and trading customers throughout Switzerland. The key figures for 2022 are not yet available. It is virtually certain that they will be far higher even if the demand via the BRACK.CH online shop has in the meantime settled at a high level. The availability of the products across all experience worlds has risen enormously and meets the desire of B2B and

B2C customers for short delivery times and faultless, complete shipments. Moreover, the improved degree of volume utilization has the advantage for Competec of generating increased sales. This is because during the lockdowns many customers learned to appreciate the comfort of ordering these goods online and having them delivered conveniently to the front door. In the medium parts-warehouse in particular, 80,000 storage spaces are already occupied. Hence, with the remaining almost 20,000 there is an adequate buffer for accommodating additional product worlds, which are in huge demand, particularly during heavy sales periods, such as the Cyber Week beginning on Black Friday and also in the run-up to Christmas.



**Stoecklin Logistics Inc.**

US-Roswell, GA 30076  
tel +1 678 244 1537

info-us@stoecklin.com  
www.stoecklin.us

**C.A.S. Engineering Ltd.**

GB-Aston Oxon OX18 2DQ  
tel +44 1993 851790  
tel +44 1993 851793

info@stocklin.co.uk

**Stöcklin Logistik AG**

CH-4242 Laufen  
tel +41 61 705 81 11

info@stoecklin.com  
www.stoecklin.com

**SWISS QUALITY FOR YOU**

