

BOUX AVENUE ENHANCES THE ORDER FULFILMENT PROCESS, REDUCING TEMPORARY LABOUR BY 33%

Implementing the OPEX® Sure Sort® system increased Boux Avenue's overall efficiency, fulfilling over 10,000 orders per day.



// THE BACKGROUND

Boux Avenue, the design-led lingerie and swimwear brand owned by TPRG (Theo Paphitis Retail Group), is an omni-channel retailer with around 30 stores in the UK that also sells through its ecommerce site, bouxavenue.com. Boux Avenue was launched in 2011 and has approximately 30,000 SKUs that are shipped internationally to customers through the company's 23,000 square feet distribution centre. Around 100 employees typically work in the distribution centre outside of the peak season. Boux Avenue has an SLA with its customers to ship orders within three days and a 16:00 cut-off for next-day order shipping.

// THE CHALLENGE

As the company continued to grow, Boux Avenue relied on hiring additional staff to keep up with strong customer demand, especially during peak seasons when order volume is at its highest. In preparation for the peak season, Boux Avenue is typically expected to hire an additional 250 employees. This huge increase in its workforce could result in a higher risk of human error. Rising inflation in the UK also significantly contributed to increased labour and operating costs, leading Boux Avenue to search for a solution that would increase throughput and efficiency without significantly increasing its workforce based on current customer demand.

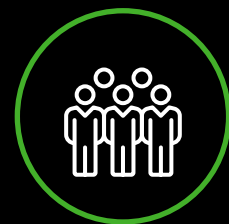
// KEY CHALLENGES



SLA TO SHIP ORDERS WITHIN THREE BUSINESS DAYS AND A 16:00 CUT-OFF TIME FOR NEXT-DAY SHIPPING



RISING LABOUR COSTS AND INFLATION INCREASED OPERATING COSTS



RELIANCE ON TEMPORARY LABOUR DURING PEAK SEASON INCREASES THE RISK FOR ERRORS

// KEY RESULTS

5X

INCREASE IN ORDERS
PICKED PER EMPLOYEE
PER HOUR

2KM

OF WALKING REDUCED
FOR EACH WORK ASSIGNMENT
ON AVERAGE

33.3%

REDUCTION IN SEASONAL
LABOUR NEEDED FOR
PEAK SEASON

// THE SOLUTION

The business set out to source an automation solution, which would need to fit in with the size and scale of their operation. After discovering the OPEX® Sure Sort® system through an online video, Boux Avenue implemented the high-speed sorting solution at its distribution centre, moving to batch-picking from individual order picking. The batch-picking process improved Boux Avenue's order collation and overall efficiency without impacting the customer experience. After the ramp-up period of four to six weeks, the system achieved a peak throughput rate of 1,200 items per hour, handling 95% of all Boux Avenue's products, excluding larger items.

With the automated fulfilment process in place, system operators can pick up to 50 orders and 250 items per hour. Before automating the order fulfilment process, each employee could pick 12 orders and 50 items per hour due to how much each employee needed to walk throughout the warehouse to manually pick items. Walking to pick orders was reduced by an average of two kilometres per work assignment.

// THE FUTURE

In preparation for Black Friday 2023, Boux Avenue expected to hire over 40% less staff than previously expected for the peak season, which is around 150 fewer temporary staff members, now that the Sure Sort system has been successfully implemented. The new sorting solution from OPEX allows Boux Avenue to keep up with future increases in demand while significantly improving efficiency without increasing labour needs.

"THE OPEX ENGINEERS AND TECHNICIANS WERE EASY TO WORK WITH AND IMPLEMENTING THE SURE SORT SYSTEM WENT AS SMOOTHLY AS ANY AUTOMATION START-UP I HAVE EVER WORKED ON."

-Paul Kee
TPRG Group Supply Chain Director (UK)

THE SURE SORT IS VERY MUCH A PART OF OUR DAY-TO-DAY WAY OF WORKING ON ECOMMERCE FULFILMENT AND WAS SUCCESSFULLY RAMPED UP IN A MATTER OF WEEKS.

-Paul Kee
TPRG Group Supply Chain Director (UK)