



ASOS selects BS Handling Systems to install GOH system for 500,000 garments

Leicester based materials handling and storage specialists, BS Handling Systems has recently completed a major contract to design, manufacture and install a hanging garment solution (GOH) for ASOS in Barnsley.

ASOS
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The innovative system includes a 30m long ladder conveyor to transport garments up to a 10m high mezzanine, GOH racking for half a million garments, a Slickrail system to move items into and out of store locations and a decline conveyor to automatically transport them back down to the 6m mezzanine level for packing.

Global retailer, ASOS, is a phenomenally successful British online fashion and beauty store selling over 850 brands as well as its own range of clothing and accessories. The company's main fulfilment centre (FC) is situated in Barnsley and fulfils the majority of online orders. With an impressive footprint of 650,000 sq ft and the capacity to hold some 20 million units, the FC employs up to 4,000 operatives, delivering ASOS products to 240 countries and territories around the world.

“BS Handling Systems are a great team to work with. What sets them apart is that they work with you; they care about the project and they are enthusiastic to do the best possible job.”

Mike Kosciukiewicz, Senior Development Manager, ASOS Supply Chain

Originally the company received all of its garments flat packed in boxes from its suppliers. The garments were then put into storage and orders processed and fulfilled in boxes. However, it was decided that certain products would be better presented to customers if they were received and stored on hangers.

As a result, ASOS changed their system so that when garments arrive at the FC they are already hanging and they are put in storage in the same way. It is only when an order is being fulfilled that they are folded into special suit boxes, to prevent crushing, ready for despatch. The success of this decision has enabled ASOS to sell more premium products including evening wear and wedding dresses.





Moving away from a labour intensive manual system

Mike Kosciukiewicz, Senior Development Manager, ASOS Supply Chain, explains why a new solution was needed for the 500,000 garments which are stored on hangers in the FC, "Our original hanging garment storage was split over three different floors – it was a manual solution which we had kept adding to over the years as the company grew.

"The hanging garments were moved around from Goods In on rails, taken to the different floors by goods lift and then wheeled in small batches to the storage areas. Bringing ordered garments back down to the ground floor was the same, very time consuming and labour intensive procedure.

"We took the view that if we wanted to continue to expand our hanging garment capacity then we needed to store all of the products in one place and move them around using conveyors to drive the efficiency of the operators.

"Three suppliers with experience in GOH systems were asked to tender for this major project. It was BS Handling Systems that came back with the most appropriate solution at the best value for us. They were awarded the contract."



"Bringing product up to the top mezzanine by conveyor from Goods In has massively simplified the delivery process and pushing the garments down the Slickrail line to the required location has increased our put-away speed."

Mike Kosciukiewicz, Senior Development Manager, ASOS Supply Chain

Introducing automation to maximise efficiency

Kosciukiewicz continues, "Although we had a good idea of the type of GOH system we wanted, BS Handling Systems were involved in the design process right from the start.

"They were proactive in helping us to design the conveyor system to automate the movement of garments. They also helped us to maximise storage capacity on the 10m high top floor of our mezzanine – the designated storage area for up to 500,000 hanging garments."



"If we change our minds, or want to do something differently, BS Handling Systems are very responsive and able to react quickly with new ideas."

Mike Kosciukiewicz, Senior Development Manager, ASOS Supply Chain

Inside the FC the garments on hangers are received at Goods In and fed by operatives directly onto a 30m long incline conveyor. A structure has been built to safely house this conveyor which automatically takes the garments up to the top floor of the mezzanine. Here the garments are placed into a buffer area which has been created with capacity for inbound receipting of 5,000 items. Once that process is complete, the products are sent along a Slickrail system to be put away.



Once an order is received, the product is picked and then put onto a second conveyor system which takes the garments down to the 6m mezzanine to be packed.





Long term benefits for the business

“Putting all of the garments together in one place and using a conveyor system to move them around the FC has made us more efficient,” adds Kosciukiewicz.

“Bringing product up to the top mezzanine by conveyor from Goods In has massively simplified the delivery process; pushing the garments down the Slickrail line to the required location has increased our put-away speed and ordered product is automatically brought back down to packing area.



“This project has future-proofed our stockholding capacity of garment hanging for the next three years and given us room to expand our capacity to support future growth.”

Kosciukiewicz concludes, “BS Handling Systems are a great team to work with. What sets them apart is that they work with you; they care about the project and they are enthusiastic to do the best possible job. They are also very flexible. If we change our minds, or want to do something differently, they are very responsive and able to react quickly with new ideas.

“It’s good to work with people who are like that, which is why they’ve just won another contract for ASOS, a much bigger job which will be completed later in the year.”



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Mike Kosciukiewicz, Senior Development Manager, ASOS Supply Chain

BS Handling Systems

Established in 2009, BS Handling Systems is a provider of warehouse, storage and conveyor solutions across a broad cross-section of industries. Our first principle of business is customer satisfaction and peace of mind. Based in Leicester and drawing on 40 years' experience in the materials handling industry, we offer a unique competence in delivering bespoke systems and solutions.

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