

## Argento Increase Picking Speed & Overall Organisation



### About Argento

Argento are one of the leading suppliers of woman's jewellery in the UK. They believe that "every woman's jewellery box is full of the memories of her life; with each piece of carefully selected jewellery telling a story of laughter, friendship and love". As such Argento have a vast, global, sourcing network that aims to bring the most diverse, quality, pieces to their customers.

Argento Chief Executive Peter Boyle opened the first store in 1997 and has ensured continuous growth by sourcing the best pieces at the cutting edge of contemporary jewellery. Now, with established lines such as Pandora, Pilgrim and Thomas Sabo, Argento has 40 stores nationwide. They have continued to develop an exceptional customer service ethos that runs throughout the entire company.

### About Industore

Industore are the exclusive distributor of German manufacturer Hänel's automated storage and retrieval systems for the UK and Ireland. They specialise in the design, supply, installation and servicing of automated storage solutions, vertical carousels, storage lifts and related control and software solutions.

They have a nationwide sales and service network with offices in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Cardiff, Belfast, Glasgow, Dublin and Galway.

### Argento's Challenge

The problem for Argento, although a good one to have, was that their success was leading them into a steady expansion; an expansion that required them to start storing more and more stock. With new retail stores opening all the time across of the United Kingdom, the Argento HQ in Belfast was fast running out of space in which to store the ever increasing amount of stock needed to supply this vast network of stores.

All of their items were being stored in plastic buckets on traditional pallet racking and there simply wasn't enough floor space to install any more racking in which to accommodate more buckets. Argento were therefore left with a choice; either to seek out and make the costly move to a new base, which would also disrupt their operations, or to seek an alternative solution that could help them make the most of their existing space. In addition Argento were also looking for a solution that would help lower their overall stock holding to accommodate future growth and improve efficiency.

After a number of recommendations from trusted sources, they decided to approach Industore, leaders in automated storage and vertical carousels. Argento asked Industore to come in and see if their Hänel Rotomat could provide a cost effective solution to the floor space challenge and perhaps also bring some of the additional benefits associated with automated storage solutions.

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### The Solution

Industore went to Argento's Belfast HQ and established that even though there was minimal floor space available, there was more than enough available height to install a five-meter high Hänel Rotomat. In addition Industore highlighted a couple of other potential benefits to Argento in terms of;

- The potential to increase their picking speed,
- The potential to increase their picking accuracy, and
- The potential to improve the security of their stock.

After looking at Industore's proposal, and understanding the potential gains from the solution, Argento decided to have a five-meter high Rotomat installed.

The Rotomat is mainly used to store Argento's two biggest brands; Pandora and Thomas Sabo. When full the Rotomat contains stock to the value of roughly £1million cost, however one full box within the Rotomat could retail for £10,000 on its own. Therefore the Rotomat's lockable sliding door plays a critical role in preventing unauthorised access out of hours.

### Final Word From The Customer

Mel Boyle, GM of Argento said: "There are lots of reasons that we chose Industore to provide us with the Hänel Rotomat, however it was primarily it was for the storage space increase it could provide. But we also saw potential to increase speed, increase efficiency, achieve better organisation and improve security. Before the installation of the Rotomat we used to store all of our stock in a traditional

pallet racking system and, as we grew, we were requiring more and more space. If we hadn't implemented the Rotomat we would have had to move site for sure, that would have been the only alternative, and it would have been a significantly costlier alternative.

The implementation of the Rotomat has almost 'forced' us into better organisation; not to say we weren't organised before, but now we operate at a much higher level. We have a lot more visibility over our stock and that has subsequently improved our stock accuracy, allowing us to reduce the overall stock being held.

Industore were really the only company that we looked at. We had three separate recommendations, so that was more than good enough for us. We knew it was a quality product; we just needed to know if we had the space to install it.

I would say that the biggest additional benefit we've seen since implementation has been a significant increase in our productivity. Because we can manage the stock better - in the sense that everything is more transparent and we can organise picking more efficiently - it has seen us become more productive as a result.

At Christmas, which is our busiest period, we had one person picking and four people sorting. In previous years we had more staff and they were all getting in each other's way trying to pick individual orders. Our best picking day also came at Christmas; in a single day we managed to pick 13,000 items. During that day a third of the time was spent double checking the picks, so it could have been even more if we removed the checks.

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*“Our best day so far came at Christmas. In a single day we managed to pick 13,000 items. And during that day a third of the time was spent double checking the picks. I would say that since the implementation of the vertical carousel we are easily doing things three or four times faster than we were previously.”*

**Mel Boyle, General Manager, Argento**