

Scallog robotics are key to Groupe Blondel's performance at the Airbus site in Rochefort, in response to dynamic growth in aerospace logistics!



As an onsite logistics partner to Airbus, which has just announced an unprecedented ramp-up in its global production – nearly 1,000 aircraft annually by 2025 – Groupe Blondel will begin deploying Scallog's Goods to Person robotics this summer at its site in Rochefort, France, in a bid to absorb steadily growing picking volumes while safeguarding its human capital.

7 June 2022 – As part of its CSR policy, Groupe Blondel – a company with expertise in the supply chain and industrial logistics in particular – strives to manage and preserve its human capital across all its businesses so as to achieve the company's ambitious goal of €300 million in turnover in 2023. Founded in 1956 as a carrier and now boasting comprehensive know-how in logistics, the family-owned Groupe Blondel maintains 300,000 sq.m of warehouse space across 35 logistics sites. Twelve of those sites are dedicated to industrial logistics in France, North Africa and Canada, serving more than 300 customers. The company is seeing significant growth in turnover, which stood at €240 million in 2021 – an increase of more than 45% in five years – thanks to the quality of its services and the commitment of its 2,300 workers. As a partner to Airbus, which posted the biggest profit in its history in 2021, Groupe Blondel – and particularly its 12,000-sq.m Rochefort site, located near the Airbus manufacturing facility – needs to **innovate in order to create an operations logistics chain that is**

consistently more agile and efficient, given that its customer's rate of production is likely to accelerate. To absorb that unprecedented ramp-up in volume, in August 2022 Groupe Blondel plans to deploy the Scallog solution at the Rochefort site, to include two picking stations, six Bobby robots and 160 shelf units. **Its goal? To become faster and more competitive in its parts picking while reducing intense labour conditions, and the need for shift work in particular.**

Says Christian Debucquet, Director of Groupe Blondel's Industry BU for western France, 'We need to support our partner, Airbus, as it faces dynamic growth and new production challenges, by doing an increasingly efficient job of just-in-time picking for the wide variety of parts needed at its production workstations. The Scallog solution should help in that regard by mobilizing robotics technology that lets us operate more efficiently and make the most of our employees and at the same time meet the standards for traceability and transparency that our industrial customer requires.'

Efficiency and working conditions: core Groupe Blondel values – When it comes to absorbing the unprecedented surge in Airbus's production volumes, Groupe Blondel's Rochefort site is on the front lines. Located near an Airbus manufacturing facility, the industrial logistics site spans 12,000 square metres and employs 120 workers, receiving an average of 160,000 deliveries and a million related services each year. Its role is to serve as the interface between supplier deliveries and the production workstations, using a lean strategy of having the right part at the right place at the right time. Back in early 2021, Groupe Blondel began looking for an **automation solution that would help it accelerate its picking operations and also improve operator productivity and working conditions.** Groupe Blondel is known for being a responsible employer and believes that increased competitiveness should not come at the expense of its human capital. So the logistics firm wanted a **high-tech solution** that, given increasing volumes, offered a guarantee of **less arduous operations**, eliminated travel across the site and prevented stress and musculoskeletal disorders, and that also **prevented the need for non-standard work hours**, which are disruptive and lead to various ailments.

Proven technology in the industry and a shared culture and values – For meeting the challenges of cost-effectiveness and positive working conditions, Scallog's Goods to Person robotics solution — in which robots carry parts to operators on shelving — quickly emerged as the technological solution that Groupe Blondel was looking for, and the company made its decision in the spring of 2022. According to Christophe Debucquet, 'The Goods to Person solution was well suited to our needs and could be quickly deployed, but in addition, we especially appreciated the Scallog team's skills and involvement in guiding us towards operational excellence based on our shared core values'. For today's industrial world, in which a break in the industrial line is unthinkable and capital resilience is a necessity, the Scallog solution will also be able to operate in degraded mode in the event of a blackout.

In summer 2022, working in close collaboration with Scallog, Groupe Blondel will be installing a new, automated 700-sq.m warehouse that includes two picking stations, six Bobby robots and 160 shelf units and will accommodate 8,000 to 10,000 different parts — half the total parts inventory. The new facility will handle 50% of the Rochefort site's picking operations. It will ramp up in 2023 to absorb 100% of picking over time, in tandem with the faster production speeds.

A Kaizen strategy for steady gains in productivity and well-being – To provide its staff with optimal support during this change, Groupe Blondel wants to draw on a **Kaizen strategy for continuous improvement** (Kai = change and Zen = happy) to **get workers involved at every stage as the company's practices and procedures change.** For example, operators played a role in developing the picking stations, choosing the orientation of the shelving and defining the labels. Once the solution is in place, they will also be surveyed on their environment and working conditions to evaluate their level of satisfaction — a key prerequisite for keeping them engaged and ensuring the quality of their work.

Thanks to Scallog's solution, Groupe Blondel expects to see **a three-fold improvement in productivity** at the Rochefort site, **a 30% increase in storage space and a drastic reduction in picking errors**, especially with the Pick-to-Light system, which makes work easier for operators. As a result, Groupe Blondel's

picking operations will be faster and more reliable, based on defined KPIs for measuring its performance as well as employees who are 'happy and feel recognised in their work'. And that's just a start, since Groupe Blondel expects to introduce robotisation and real-time indicators company-wide.

Says Christian Debucquet, 'Deploying the Scallog solution at the Rochefort site is proving to be a pilot project for automation with the company. It's likely to be duplicated as a "forward-looking project" at other sites within our Industry & Logistics BU, which accounts for more than a quarter of our turnover, starting in late 2022. In the future, we expect that Scallog robotics will play a major role in our group for handling ever larger picking volumes across every business sector.'

About Scallog

Founded in 2013, Scallog is a French company that develops, manufactures and markets robotics solutions for the logistics sector in order to increase warehouse flexibility and productivity for 3PL, e-commerce, distribution and manufacturing companies. Faced with evolving demands among B2C and B2B clients, particularly with regard to product availability and delivery, the Scallog solution ensures that they can accelerate their order picking and absorb activity spikes while reducing workloads for employees and spreading their investment. Scallog's 'Goods-to-Person' range incorporates the best smart decision-making and mobile robotics software, enabling logistics platforms to go one step further in terms of order picking flexibility and integrate automation more widely in their processes. With over 30 clients to its name and substantial funds raised, Scallog – the pioneer in scalable, flexible logistics robotics – is now aiming to boost its growth across Europe and internationally.

www.scallog.com

About Groupe Blondel

Groupe Blondel, a European force in supply chain services, has been contributing to the success of its partners and the growth of its 2,300 employees since 1956, thanks to its ongoing search for innovation and improvement in its business activities, organised into four complementary hubs of expertise: Logistics, E-Commerce, Industry, Transport.

With more than 300 clients, Groupe Blondel wields business expertise in every industrial sector, including aeronautics, agrifood, automobiles, cosmetics, consumer retailing, energy and more.

Thanks to its financial independence and family values, Groupe Blondel aims to meet the challenges facing its partners while reducing the environmental impact of its operations, with the goal of developing responsible, sustainable supply chain solutions.

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