

Case Study

Technology and Logistics: How Automation Transformed Co-Packing Processes for BIC

FM Logistic and BIC have been working together for several years. The logistics provider delivers co-packing services for the BIC brand, involving the packing and repacking of products. BIC, a global leader in stationery, lighters, and razors, is known for its emphasis on quality, accessibility, and product sustainability. This collaboration is a model example of synergy between advanced technology and innovative logistics solutions. Through automation, sustainability focus, and the use of modern management systems, both companies achieve exceptional efficiency, accuracy, and operational flexibility.

"At BIC, we continuously strive to combine operational excellence with responsible innovation. Our collaboration with FM Logistic is a great example of how automation and sustainability can go hand in hand to deliver both efficiency and environmental progress. The introduction of new co-packing technologies allows us to reduce our environmental footprint while maintaining the product quality and accessibility that consumers around the world expect from us." - Roland Navratil, Director Customer Excellence Europe, BIC.

Technology at the Sered Warehouse

According to Julien Lalande, Director of FM Logistic's platform in Sered, the implementation of advanced technologies is a key part of the co-packing processes.

"We use various technologies, with the most automated being blister packaging lines and flow-pack technologies," explains Lalande. *"These production lines are combined with automated feeding systems, allowing us to achieve maximum efficiency. In addition, we've created ergonomic display assembly lines, which not only improve efficiency and simplicity but also ensure worker comfort."*

A vital component that maintains the right balance between efficiency and flexibility is a semi-automated display assembly line. This combines manual expertise with automation for the efficient and flexible assembly of promotional and retail displays.

"In this setup, machines support repetitive or heavy tasks, such as box forming, gluing, or labeling, while operators handle more complex, variable, or delicate steps, such as product placement or final touches," Lalande adds.

Semi-automation improves ergonomics, reduces packaging waste and errors, and enables smoother handling of varied customer demands. In early 2025, FM Logistic introduced a new co-packing technology for BIC at the Sered site - a cartoning line (entuyeuse) that replaces plastic materials with cardboard and increases packing speed. Under optimal conditions, the line can process thousands of items per hour. This innovation helps reduce plastic use and supports both environmental commitments and regulatory compliance.

Automation and Sustainability

FM Logistic actively focuses on sustainable solutions that reduce environmental impact. The paper-plastic blister technology used for BIC products reduces plastic consumption while maintaining product visibility, protection, and branding design opportunities.

This technology – common in sectors such as healthcare, cosmetics, consumer goods, and increasingly pharmaceuticals – combines human-centered design, operational efficiency, and eco-conscious practices, becoming a powerful driver of responsible growth.

Another example is flow-pack technology, where products are packaged in continuous film sealed on three sides. Used for both food and non-food items, it offers high-speed, cost-effective, and versatile packaging for individual or multi-product packs.

This solution enhances shelf life, hygiene, and product presentation while offering material flexibility – from traditional plastic to recyclable or paper alternatives.

"Flow-pack technology provides high-speed, cost-efficient, and flexible packaging suitable for recyclable or paper-based materials. It also reduces material costs, promotes mono-material usage, and helps meet environmental targets without compromising functionality," adds Lalande.

WMS and PMS Systems – The Backbone of Efficiency

To maintain flexibility across markets, BIC integrates closely with FM Logistic's digital infrastructure. Warehouse Management Systems (WMS) and Production Management Systems (PMS) are used to ensure smooth operations. WMS handles warehouse activities like inventory tracking, goods movement, and accurate customer deliveries. PMS oversees co-packing and display creation processes.

This digital orchestration has proven especially valuable during peak seasons, when up to half of BIC's annual co-packing volume must be handled in just four months.

"What's critical for BIC is the ability to plan ahead, scale with precision, and still ensure consistent quality across markets. The combination of automation and real-time data helps us do that," says Roland Navratil, Director Customer Excellence Europe, BIC.

Key Benefits for BIC

Through close collaboration with FM Logistic, BIC has been able to enhance its operational agility, sustainability, and service delivery across Europe. The partnership is built on shared values – including innovation, efficiency, and environmental responsibility – and delivers tangible results:

- **Faster Time-to-Market:** Automated co-packing lines and digital coordination enable quicker response to market demands and streamlined fulfillment across key regions.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Smart packaging technologies and centralized logistics reduce manual handling, minimize material waste, and drive down costs.
- **Reliable Product Availability:** Flexible production planning and a robust distribution network ensure that BIC products reach retail shelves on time, even during seasonal peaks.
- **Integrated European Logistics:** With FM Logistic managing end-to-end operations – from co-packing to warehousing and distribution – across countries such as

France, Slovakia, Spain, and Italy, BIC benefits from simplified coordination, better visibility, and increased supply chain resilience.

Technology as a Driver of Precision

Technology plays a key role in reducing human error and increasing packaging precision. Replacing manual tasks with machines or algorithms minimizes mistakes caused by fatigue, distraction, or repetitive work.

"For instance, the previously mentioned blister and flow-pack lines are programmed to apply exact amounts of material, place products precisely, and seal packages consistently – something very difficult to achieve manually at the same speed and accuracy," says Lalande.

This results in reduced product waste, correct labeling, and consistently presented packaging.

Meeting Seasonal Demand: Strategic Planning at Scale

One of the most complex challenges BIC faces is the seasonality of its product demand. A substantial portion of the company's annual co-packing volume must be completed within a four-month window, requiring precise coordination across production, packaging, and distribution.

BIC works closely with its logistics partner FM Logistic to plan and scale operations ahead of peak periods. This includes early forecasting, alignment with subcontractors up to six months in advance, and leveraging automation to ensure consistency and speed during high-volume runs.

"Our products need to be on shelves at the right time, every time – even when demand spikes. Through long-term planning and smart partnerships, we're able to meet those seasonal peaks without compromising our standards," says Roland Navratil, Director Customer Excellence Europe, BIC.

To support BIC's needs, FM Logistic has also adapted its workforce model – focusing on a core team of qualified technicians who operate automated lines, and scaling up support only when needed. This ensures a more stable, efficient co-packing process aligned with BIC's expectations around quality, sustainability, and time-to-market.

Conclusion

The partnership between BIC and FM Logistic demonstrates how shared commitment to innovation, sustainability, and operational excellence can transform complex supply chain processes. By aligning strategic goals with technological solutions, both companies have achieved greater agility, reduced environmental impact, and enhanced product availability across key markets. Together, BIC and FM Logistic are not only meeting today's logistical demands – they are shaping a new benchmark for the future of co-packing and sustainable supply chain collaboration.