

Grabower Süswaren Holding | Prints RFID and Bar Code Labels from SAP

Corporate Profile | RFID for Meringues

Grabower Süswaren Holding, one of Germany's leading makers of chocolate soft whip meringue, whipped waffles, cookies and crispbread, has decided to use Printronix RFID and line matrix printers, the number one in industrial printing. The Grabower group is looking to the future of supply chain management by looking into technologies to enable RFID and barcode printing directly from SAP. In addition, the confectionary maker is meeting requirements for supplying major retail chains like Metro and REWE directly with RFID-labelled pallets, while at the same time using this open solution to put itself in the ideal position for the strongly growing export side.

The Grabower group of companies has four locations in Germany, including the headquarters in Grabow, Mecklenburg, Arnstadt, Thuringia, Altenschönbach in Bavaria, and Wurzen in Saxony, that make a variety of sweets, whipped waffles, cookies, waffles and crispbread. Entrepreneurial couple Monika and Otto Lithardt have been managing this expanding traditional company successfully since 1996. The couple export their much-loved confections to more than 54 countries. The four facilities have 700 employees and all of the locations are certified to International Food Standards (IFS).

Meringues as far as the eye can see

Grabower's headquarters in Grabow employs more than 250 people who work three-shifts. This facility develops new products and makes the sugar-free Grabower meringues and Grabower Bio-Meringues.

Raw materials and packing materials arrive at the Grabow facility daily for processing sending the meringues to customers throughout Europe. There are seven fully-automated production lines that make the signature whipped meringues with the characteristic tip. At the end of the production lines, the finished goods are put in each customer's packaging and packed for dispatch.

Grabower Süswaren recently completed a redesign and automation of the Grabow warehouse facility, which led to increased preparation space. The extra space allows production to receive packing and raw materials faster.

With its new storage system and cutting-edge peripherals, Grabower Süswaren GmbH can achieve a higher throughput and more compact storage. The Grabow facility only sends whole pallets to its customers' central stores and to its own central stores at Arnstadt. The Arnstadt facility is responsible for picking and packing part lots.

For a smooth transition, the pallets are scanned near by the goods bay. Here, pallets are scanned, while on the forklift, and labelled with all relevant supply chain data, such as product name, date produced, sell by date, weight, quantity and production code. With the upgraded production line, the information for the RFID tag or a straight Bar code comes directly from SAP formatted to each customer's specifications.

Up to 6.5 million soft whip meringues leave the Grabow facility daily. In Germany, the company supplies many large retail chains and top discounters, and has established itself as the number one soft whip meringue supplier.



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Problem Met | RFID specialist sought for printing from SAP

Grabower Süswaren Holding needed a print solution that could easily integrate with the existing SAP system and internal Windows network. In addition, the printers had to be absolutely reliable, work accurately and guarantee perfect service. Printer system integrator, PUR PRINT SYSTEME GmbH and good references from the food industry drew Grabower's attention to Printronix.

"When we decided to use RFID printers at the Grabow and Arnstadt facilities, we decided on Printronix because its high-performance printers can print both barcode (EAN 128) and RFID labels direct from SAP," said Ulrich Kasten, IT manager, Grabower Süswaren Holding. "These printers offer everything we want from an industrial printer. In addition to how they work, the technical impression, flexibility and price-performance ratio of these reliable printers is what convinced us."

The Printronix Solution

Integrated in company's network

Grabower Süswaren Holding has been managing its whole stock control system using the SAP R/3 System since 2002. PUR PRINT SYSTEME GmbH integrated the newly installed Printronix printers with the company's internal Windows network with eight servers and more than seventy clients.

"Installation was relatively easy because Printronix printers emulate programming languages from other printer manufacturers," said Bodo Pieczonkowski, managing director of PUR PRINT SYSTEME and manager of the new printer installation. "The new printers worked perfectly with the Zebra emulation from SAP already installed."

Flexible, high-precision logistics work

The new Printronix equipment allows Grabower the flexibility and precision it needs by printing the RFID or Bar code labels required directly from SAP. A direct link to SAP enables the system to recognize if RFID or Bar code labels are needed. Now, the Grabower group of companies can meet customers' specific requirements and respond flexibly to new demands in supply chain management at any time.

"We print about 30 percent of all our dispatch labels as RFID," said Kasten. "We believe more and more customers will be switching to RFID in future, and our new Printronix printers put us in the ideal position."

Convinced by PUR PRINT SYSTEME GmbH's recommendations, Grabower decided to buy RFID mid-range printers and line matrix printers from Printronix. This proved to be the ideal solution, since they could be integrated seamlessly with the existing SAP system and interfaced with their existing printer languages.

Printronix SL4M – The cost-effective RFID alternative

"At a time when people are switching from barcode to RFID, we see a need to offer flexible, future-proof solutions, which is why companies can always use the SL4M to print both RFID and Bar code labels," said Otto J. Kilb, strategic business development manager, Printronix EMEA.

The SL4M fits seamlessly into any SAP application and it supports seven printer languages and direct XML print in 203 or 305 dpi resolution. Thanks to its easy-to-use, icon-driven user interface, it's easy to install and configure – which is particularly important for business-critical applications at the loading bay.



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"We are very pleased that the Grabower group of companies, one of Germany's leading sweet makers, is convinced how powerful and flexible our printers are," said Kilb. "This shows us once again that major manufacturers, retail chains and distribution centers all over the world prefer the SL4M with its patented RFID MP2 encoding technology, as it slots in seamlessly into existing systems as a cost-effective RFID solution."

P7205 – Better price per page for shipping documents

In addition to pallet labels, the shipping documents must also be printed directly from SAP on multi-part forms. In the course of switching to the SL4M RFID label printer, it was also decided to buy line matrix printers from Printronix to replace the laser printers used to date. The Printronix line matrix printers reduced operating costs by 10 times because of their flexibility in handling print applications.

"We've just bought another line matrix printer for our Arnstadt facility, as the printer has already proven itself after just one year in use," said Kasten.

Customer Feedback | Being a reliable partner opens doors to customers

"We opted for the reliability of the Printronix solution, because we supply our customers with pallets which must be uniquely identifiable and which their own systems can read any time. This puts us in an ideal position, for our customers today and our new projects at home and abroad tomorrow."

Ulrich Kasten

IT Manager, Grabower Süswaren Holding

About Grabower Süswarenholding

At four sites in Germany, with over 700 staff, Grabower Süswaren Holding's sales are €145M in its five strategic segments, whipped waffles, waffles, chocolate soft whip meringue, cookies and crispbread. Grabower's operations are certified to IFS (International Food Standard) and Bio. As well as its booming domestic business, the group is expanding its export sales systematically. The crowning glory of numerous awards the Grabower group of companies has won is the Golden Clock of SG 2008 for particular services in the sweet economy. The Grabower group of companies supplies its products to more than 54 countries, and appears regularly at major national and international fairs like ANUGA, ISM, BIOFACH, SWEETS CHINA, WORLD FOOD etc. For more information, visit: www.grabower.de

About P.U.R. Print Systeme GmbH

P.U.R. Print Systeme GmbH, an independent print solutions supplier since 2001, based in Dessau, Germany, offers professional office and industrial print solutions for applications for individual customers. With a wealth of experience and know-how, and a nationwide service network, this print solutions supplier advises and acts quickly and professionally when it comes to installing, servicing and repairing new and used print systems. Services can be provided under fixed service agreements or on application to your nearest P.U.R. or P.U.R./Partner base. For more information, see: www.pur-print-systeme.de

About Printronix

Since 1974, Printronix Inc. has created innovative printing solutions for the industrial marketplace and supply chain. The company is the worldwide market leader in enterprise solutions for line matrix printing and has an outstanding reputation for its high-performance thermal bar code and fanfold laser printing solutions. Printronix also is an established leader in pioneering technologies, including radio frequency identification (RFID) printing, bar-code compliance and networked printer management. Printronix is headquartered in Irvine, Calif. For company information, see www.printronix.com.

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