



REVERSE LOGISTICS

Reversing into the future



Due to stricter recycling laws and their own drive for sustainability, companies are increasingly focusing on their reverse supply chain. The Norbert Dentressangle Group deploys market-leading expertise to give its customers a competitive advantage.

Norbert Dentressangle Group's reverse-logistics expertise is reflected in a portfolio that includes the UK's top two food retailers. "Our UK-wide integrated network of service centres, fleet and management provides unrivalled one-stop solutions for all return flows," says Rob Berry, Director of Reverse Logistics and Environmental Management. The offering has expanded beyond the traditional tray-washing and card/plastic baling to include flow management for disposable cameras, books, animal by-products and much more. The Group also provides advanced services such as environmental consultancy and reverse supply chain modelling; carbon & waste management strategy development, environmental compliance, and development of Corporate Social Responsibility Programmes. "We're also working with packaging manufacturers on exciting designs to reduce material content," adds Rob Berry.

State of the art, 24/7

Since 2002, the Norbert Dentressangle Group's logistics teams have been helping retailer Asda to turn its network of eight tray-washing sites into state-of-the-art Asda service centres (ASCs). Built from scratch, these are run 24/7 by about 600 employees of the Group. "Our partner has helped us to develop technologies to raise levels of operational efficiency across our reverse network," says Asda's Reverse Logistics Manager Matt Gravestock.

Asda's cutting-edge service centres operate 24/7 for tray-washing. Norbert Dentressangle has made a major contribution to their operational efficiency.

Asda's top corporate-sustainability objective is zero waste to landfill by 2010. "One of the best ways to do that is via the reverse network – by bulking up waste, we can then pass it on to companies with the technology to generate clean energy," says Matt Gravestock. No wonder Asda is a serial winner of "green" accolades, such as the 2007 Most Environmentally Friendly Retailer Award.

To track Asda's six million plastic trays and other returnable equipment, Norbert Dentressangle Group used its in-house program Comet, which supplies Asda with net-balance and location data to ensure total traceability and faster cycle times.

Sustainable efficiency

The service centres Norbert Dentressangle designs for its customers have features including rainwater harvesting, heat exchangers, and combined heat & power. "We use rainwater stored in underground tanks for tray-washing machines and toilets, plus other grey-water uses", says Matt Gravestock. "The business is a heavy water consumer, so that saves us a lot of money." Asda's partner also provides readouts to allow constant carbon-footprint monitoring.

Norbert Dentressangle has good prospects in the UK reverse-logistics market. The Group is currently exploring opportunities in healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and recycling for local authorities.



"When the Norbert Dentressangle Group took over the rollcage-repair business, it saved Asda £250,000 in the first year of operation."

The Group's reverse logistics activities in the United Kingdom

- Per year:
 - 380 million tray movements,
 - 330,000 tonnes of cardboard and plastic recycled,
 - handles 1 million store-returning vehicles (with 15-minute turnaround).
- 23 years' experience in asset management (recycling and equipment washing).
- 12 years' experience in reverse logistics centre management.

The benefits

- Competitive solutions.
- Eco-friendly facilities.
- Faster equipment cycle times.
- Standardised procedures.

