

New warehouse will improve Sandvik's services to customers in the Benelux and Germany

An interview with Mr. Mathias Johansson, project manager at Sandvik Material Technology in Sweden by Tjaart Theron

'Sandvik had two warehouses in the Netherlands, one in Schiedam and one in Venlo,' Johansson explains. 'The product group Fittings & Flanges had to be moved to Venlo, where 4,000 m2 of the 12,000 m2 was reserved for it. But we needed an entirely new concept for the warehouse to accommodate this move. Through this investment, the business area's customers in the Benelux countries and Germany will receive a significantly faster and more efficient service. The relevant product can be delivered to customers within 24 – 48 hours if needed. Direct delivery to customers is a key competitive factor.'

Groenewout's contribution



Mathias Johansson

Johansson: 'Because of the move of part of the warehouse from Schiedam to Venlo, we needed advice from an engineering firm. We wanted to know how this could be done in the most optimal way possible. What Groenewout did was to help look at different alternatives. They provided us with three or four options – ranging from low to highly automated possibilities.'

'We were of the opinion that the preliminary study performed by Groenewout was done in a thorough and expert way and answered all of the questions we had', he continues. 'In the end we selected an intermediate option, which was not very automated, but still a higher level of automation than we had thought necessary at the beginning.'

'Along the way, Groenewout's role changed and we asked them to do more for us', says Johansson. 'We asked them to make sure we have the right kind of certification required for the warehouse. Because they knew the local situation we asked them to advise us about the right kind of suppliers for the building and construction required to make changes to the existing building - among other, a new mezzanine floor and racking. They also took care of the handling equipment for materials. The latter included things ranging from warehouse trucks and elevators to lifting equipment. Groenewout obviously knew what they were doing and had the ability to negotiate good deals with the suppliers and contractors. They created tender documents, sent out tenders to several suppliers and did the contracting of suppliers.'

Sandvik impressed by Groenewout's expertise

Johansson is obviously pleased with the way things went. 'They did this in an excellent way,' he explains. 'We provided a programme of requirements and Groenewout found potential suppliers. They produced offers and helped to evaluate the suppliers. Then, finally we sat down with Groenewout and jointly made the selection. We then took a joint decision with Groenewout about the best fit for different parts.' He continues: 'Next came the execution phase. At beginning of 2008 Groenewout started with the realization of the project.'

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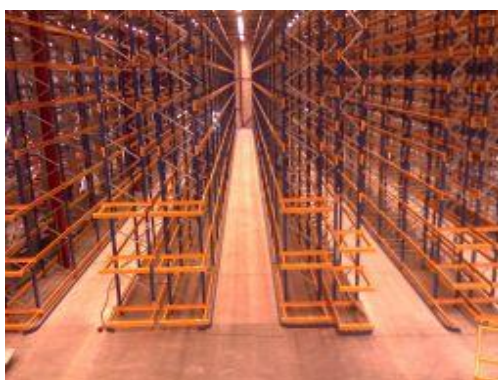
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We depended on them for the planning, the budget, the technical requirements and the realization of the inside of the warehouse. We also asked them to do the quality control after delivery.'



'Everything came in well below the budget and within the scheduled time'

According to Johansson, Groenewout always acted very professionally during the tendering phase. 'When we had any problems with the certification of suppliers they always managed to solve the problems', says Johansson. 'They made all the arrangements with the municipality with regard to the permits and other issues needed. The people from Groenewout prepared a building permit for the floor. This also included calculations for a sprinkler system. The authorities stated that this was needed for the new product group and it was not available in new building. Finally, Groenewout convinced the authorities that this was not needed. In this way,' Johansson says, 'they helped us to keep to the deadline.' He concludes: 'At Sandvik we were very happy with the fact that they kept a budget overview and supplied us with the current status every two weeks. Thanks to Groenewout, we came out below the budget and exactly according to the schedule.'

By Tjaart Theron

Tjaart Theron was born in South Africa and has lived in the Netherlands since 1985. He completed a Masters in Economics at the Institute of Social Sciences in The Hague. He has worked as English native speaker copywriter for large international companies.

More information

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