

Trebor Bassett Improves Delivery with WITNESS



Trebor Bassett is using WITNESS to help improve planning and efficiency across its operations at its U.K. National Distribution Centre. To date, WITNESS has been used at Trebor Bassett to improve operational stability and service to customers via a new customer transport warehouse plan. In the near future, the company also intends to use the system for a variety of other applications including managing bottlenecks, materials handling, schedule proving and capacity planning.



WITNESS has brought significant benefits to Trebor Bassett. Not only has the company benefited from faster planning and improved communication, but it now has a fully working model that it uses for decision support on a day-to-day basis, changing the rules and parameters as required.

The U.K. sweet market is worth £1.8 billion and Trebor Bassett, a subsidiary of Cadbury Schweppes, is responsible for nearly one third of all sugar sweets sold. With strong growth in the market, the company is committed to growing profitability and brand strength. But in this truly competitive arena—the world’s largest impulse-buying market—customer service is key to maintaining a competitive edge.

Trebor Bassett’s National Distribution Centre (NDC) plays a key role in customer services: the efficient use of warehouse resources, including personnel, marshalling areas, vehicles and loading bays, is paramount to meeting the company’s customer service objectives. Trebor Bassett’s operation consists of 11 high-bay and 13 low-bay aisles as well as eight outbound and four inbound bays. It operates 1,000 Stock Keeping Units (SKUs) and there are 100 journeys out of the NDC per day. Recently, the company identified a need to review operations at the centre.

Company	● Trebor Bassett (Cadbury)
Industry	● Food & Drink
Application	● Distribution Logistics Planning
Benefit	● Better Planning, Improved Service

The company chose WITNESS as a part of this review. The objectives of the review were to improve operational efficiency by identifying bottlenecks and capacity issues and to improve the current approach to planning within the centre. At the time of the review, Trebor Bassett had increased volumes within the centre by 20%, in line with market growth and successful acquisitions. This, coupled with a new implementation of an ERP system within the NDC, prompted the team to maximise production efficiency to meet the new demands.

Trebor Bassett’s distribution logistics manager said, “With demand continually growing for our products and recent acquisitions increasing volumes at the NDC considerably, we wanted to be sure we would still maintain a high level of customer service. To do this, we recognised the need to look at production efficiency, specifically workflow and throughput within the centre. We chose WITNESS as a means of helping us do this.”

Improvements in customer service

As part of the drive to improve operational stability and increase efficiency and quality of service to customers, Trebor Bassett wanted to develop a new Customer Transport Warehouse Plan. They used WITNESS to simulate the distribution process and enable the distribution logistics team to improve current processes and capacity problems.

In order to ensure that the project was successful, Trebor Bassett and Lanner Group worked together in a partnership. Trebor Bassett’s professional knowledge and process understanding ensured that the modelling and planning were true-to-life and fulfilled the needs of the business. Lanner’s simulation modelling experience and WITNESS product knowledge ensured rapid progress and resulted in some skills transfer to the project. This also provided an ideal opportunity for Trebor Bassett to gain first-hand experience in applying WITNESS to its business objectives.

The Customer Transport Warehouse Plan analysed several elements in the delivery cycle, including journey planning, vehicle availability, warehouse capacity and assembly planning. Using WITNESS, Trebor Bassett built a simulated model that took these factors into account and enabled them to assess where improvements could be made in the process.

The model took approximately four weeks to complete and gave Trebor Bassett an animated view of the Customer Transport Warehouse. Using WITNESS, Trebor Bassett looked at lorries moving in and out of bays, resources and vehicles carrying out “load and assembly” operations, performance charts, journey details and capacities. The model looked at how these factors interacted and how they impacted efficiency. From the model, Trebor Bassett was able to produce a schedule for the Customer Transport Warehouse, dealing with allocation of departures—essential for meeting customer-booking requirements. The model also produced a list of outstanding work, a profile of late and early completions and a view of warehouse resource utilisation—trailers used and available, pickers, vehicles moving pallets and marshalling areas.

WITNESS has brought considerable benefits to Trebor Bassett. Not only has the company benefited from faster planning, the production of performance reports and improved communication, but it now has a fully working model that it uses for decision support on a day-to-day basis, changing the rules and parameters as required. For example, the consequences of taking a high-bay vehicle out of service or reducing the number of loading bays can be fully explored prior to making a decision on the proposed change. Now, if capacity in the warehouse is low, the team can look at how increased overtime or extra vehicles will improve the situation. This process has led to continual improvement of the entire operation. The team can also look at how specific changes or events will affect the overall operation, for example, if



CASE STUDY

an urgent order comes in. WITNESS has also provided Trebor Bassett with a greater degree of flexibility. Customer confidence in Trebor Bassett has improved even further since the model was developed. There has not been one late departure as a result of planning within the warehouse.

Further applications have already been identified for WITNESS in the NDC. These include an analysis of the benefits of re-racking the warehouse into different sized pallet spaces; a study of the utilisation and future requirements for the high-bay vehicles; an investigation into the effects on utilisation of double-decked vehicles and an analysis of the use of outside warehousing and how this interacts with the NDC.

Trebor Bassett is so pleased with the results it has seen from WITNESS, it is actively looking for other projects in the rest of the organization. The company intends to use it for a variety of other applications outside of the NDC including managing bottlenecks, materials handling, schedule proving and capacity planning within the entire manufacturing operation.

The distribution logistics manager added: "We have already used WITNESS very successfully in our Customer Transport Warehouse Plan and now are keen to use it in other parts of the business to help us maintain our leading position in the U.K. market. The more we use WITNESS, the more ways we see of using it to meet various requirements throughout the organisation."

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