International Post Corporation

PostNL puts digital trackers on 250,000 roll containers

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PostNL has embarked on a process of placing beacons on its roll containers, digital trackers that will record the movements of all these containers. Tracking roll containers is an essential prerequisite for future real-time running of the logistics chain, as it improves the quality of information and the efficiency of our services. This major project is part of PostNLâ€™s wide-ranging digital drive in which the company will invest heavily over the next couple of years.

Benefits to webshops and consumers
Using the data generated by these roll containers, PostNL will be able to make better logistics decisions in terms of planning, interventions and management. And the data also provides meaningful insights to clients: webshops delivering online orders to consumers via PostNL are able to better track collection, packaging and returns flows. Enhancing service and information in the supply chain, this also benefits consumers at the end of the day.

Generating real-time insights
These beacons use a bluetooth signal to communicate, pulling together data from across the network on an Internet of Things (IoT) platform. Where are we spotting an overflow, which roll containers are currently at our clients and where can we speed up the process? The digital trackers should help us address all these questions and more. Journeys to and from customers and between depots can be planned more efficiently, while stock turnover rates should go up as it will become clear exactly where to best use the roll containers. As well as cost efficiencies, this will bring environmental gains as there'll be less empty space in trucks.

The project's roll-out is expected to take the rest of the year. Meanwhile, a range of reports and dashboards are being developed to help analyse the data generated by the roll containers.

Source: PostNL