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Launch of Robots and Human Co-workers Collaboration Set to Revolutionise UK Warehouse Operations

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Active Ants, a fulfilment specialist for global online stores, has launched its first ever e-fulfilment centre in the UK with its revolutionary robots working alongside human team members.

The e-fulfilment company, which was created in the Netherlands in 2010, has opened its first e-fulfilment centre in Northampton, after successfully establishing multiple robot operated warehouses across Europe.

Active Ants, which has state-of-the-art robotised operations at its warehouses in The Netherlands, Germany and Belgium, has unveiled its new UK facility offering a unique setup in the e-commerce industry.

Khalil Ashong, Country Director UK: "We have a structured and efficient process which combines humans and robots. In our 252,000 sqft warehouse we can ship up to 10 million parcels a year. In full capacity over 400 robots will work next to 250 people making the site the most efficient and sustainable in the UK!" The Active Ants setup sees storage, order picking, packing and sorting all automated with employees forming an efficient team working with robots for the order picking, packing and preparation for sending. The return flow and the receipt of goods continue to be processed manually. This robotisation leads to greater efficiency, higher quality, less Co2 emission and a more pleasant work environment for the employees.

Sustainability is a key focus for the groundbreaking company and thanks to its innovative AutoStore solution, the warehouse storage takes up six times less space than a traditional warehouse. The automated packaging machines tailor make boxes to fit products, which means no box filling is needed, reducing space during last mile transport and reducing waste. In addition to this the Northampton warehouse, based in Brackmills Industrial Estate, has an A+ rating and an 'outstanding' BREEAM certification. With over 1,000 solar panels on its roof the warehouse can foresee in its own electricity.

With its unique approach, Active Ants takes over the logistics processes of e-commerce companies, mostly active in fashion, health & beauty, nutrition and small electronic

products. That allows them to focus exclusively on growth, business development, marketing, social media and customer contacts. So they are in a much better position to upscale. The fulfilment company also offers webshops with a European focus with the option to store its products close to the end-consumer because it has multiple warehouses across Europe all operated under the same advanced software. This setup reduces throughput time.

Ashong added: "Active Ants managed to combine efficiency in its processes, which reduce costs for our clients, while at the same time reducing carbon footprint, which makes the solution unique."

Interesting figures Active Ants Northampton:
Surface: 252,000 sqft warehouse
Capacity: 10 million parcels a year
Workforce in full capacity: 250 people, in combination with 400 robots
Energy source: 1,000 solar panels
Direct link to 4 Active Ants sites, next to the new one in Northampton: Roosendaal, Nieuwegein (NL), Willebroek (BE), Dorsten (D)

Source: bpost

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