



**ICT LOGISTICS CASE**

## **PolarPack** gains more control of production processes **with ICT Group and USoft**

Because PolarPack lacked insight into the performance of their packaging lines, they often could not make any adjustments until the end of a process. This is the reason why PolarPack started looking for a solution that would provide the company with more control over their production processes and that would give real-time insight into the progress of packaging lines. When their IT partner dropped out just before the launch, they involved ICT Group to take over the project. Since then, PolarPack and ICT Group have been working closely together to further digitise and optimise production processes with the USoft platform.

PolarPack specialises in the re-packing and packaging of frozen products into the desired (final) packaging. "We now have five different production lines, with which we support customers in any desired packaging process. From box contents to labels: we arrange everything down to the last detail," says Jan Voets, director at PolarPack. "We are an important part of our parent organisation Froster, where we take care of storage, inventory management and transport of frozen products. Together, we help customers manage their supply chain efficiently, by making sure frozen products are packaged and stored

under the right conditions, and that they arrive at the correct destination on time."

### **Need for more insight**

In the past, PolarPack only had limited insight into the performance of its packaging lines. Voets: "We were dependent on manual registrations and experiences of line operators to measure the output of the lines. We evaluated the number of pallets produced at the end of the day, which meant that we couldn't make adjustments until the next day if there were any deviations. And then we had to work extra hard to make up the



shortfall, while the cause often remained unclear. This also prevented us from planning and implementing improvements."

To properly ensure continuous improvements, PolarPack needed more control and real-time insight. This is the reason why the organisation chose to develop a solution using the low-code USoft platform. The solution had to help PolarPack plan production orders more accurately and receive immediate feedback from the machines. Voets: "This allows us to control the number of pieces being produced per minute, allowing us to intervene much earlier if necessary."

#### Quick action

Just before PolarPack wanted to go live with the solution, their IT partner dropped out. At that point, we involved ICT Group to take over the project. Voets: "What struck me was how ICT Group stepped in incredibly quickly and was able to solve the existing problems within no time. Of course you need to give a new partner some time to investigate and understand the solution, but that went very smoothly. The advantage for us was that ICT Group was already a partner of USoft, which came in handy during the project. They then helped us to further optimise the USoft solution. Thanks to them, we could go live and start working shortly after the start of the collaboration."

#### Continuous monitoring of production

PolarPack's production lines are now equipped with

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sensors that continuously measure the number of boxes packed. The status of production is displayed on dashboards at the machines and in the office. Line operators can immediately indicate the reason for a production stop, start new orders and monitor progress. The status is also clear to production staff, as production is continuously being displayed visually on screens near the production line.

In addition, the solution helps improve workforce planning. "The number of employees required per production line varies per job. Because we have real-time insight, we can match the staffing per line to the expected output more accurately," Voets explains. "We are now at the stage at which we are accumulating long-term knowledge and insights. Thanks to the solution in USoft, we can now collect accurate data. We are now also using these insights in calculations for new customers."





### Future plans with ICT Group

The next phase is now dawning for PolarPack, says Voets. "We want to work together with ICT Group to further expand the capabilities of the USoft platform, both for PolarPack and our parent organisation Froster."

A key goal for 2025 is to further automate the logistics process within the USoft platform. "We repackage Froster's bulk products into smaller units, for instance large volumes of chips or peas that we repackage into 1-kilo bags. When Froster transfers a product to us, we want to be able to track the product until it eventually returns to Froster. So far, all this has been registered manually, and this is even the case today," Voets explains. "During repackaging, we always have to deal with waste, drop-outs or product breakage. We want to gain insight into this and be able to trace products. How much of product A was eventually processed into product B?"

Voets: "This is crucial because clients and certifying bodies want us to make this process fully transparent. For example, if a supermarket chain comes to audit, we want to be able to show all the information within a few clicks."

### Recipes and the last-mile

Another important future project is the automation of the recipe programme. "This programme determines which bulk products and packaging we need for a specific job. For instance, if we need

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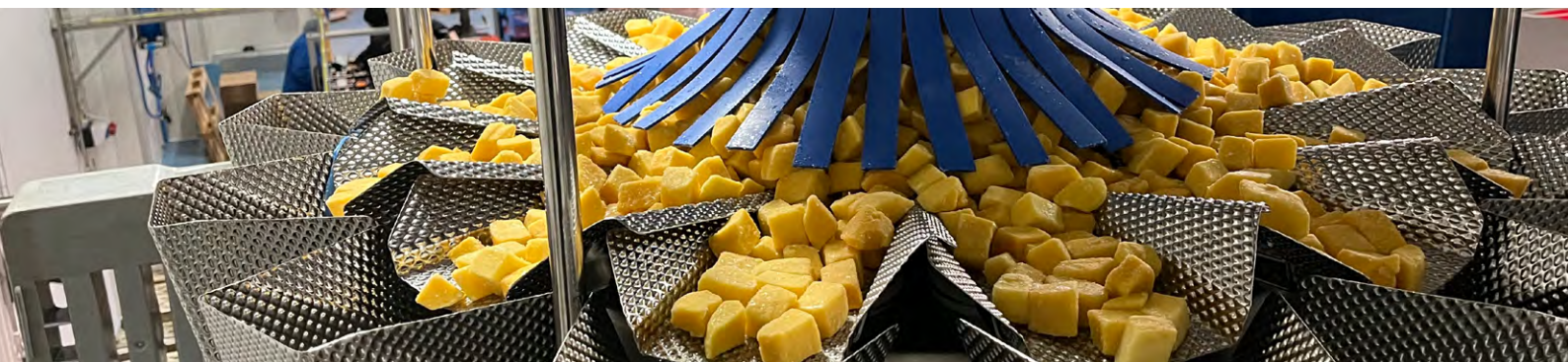


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to produce 10,000 boxes, the system tells us how many pallets and how much packaging material we need. This is currently done manually, but we want to automate this for better traceability. Thanks to our collaboration with ICT Group and USoft, I am confident that we can turn this data into useful information."

Voets also sees opportunities for Froster. "At Froster, we are already a step further in our digitalisation journey. Nevertheless, I think ICT Group can help us improve the services we provide to our clients. For example, we supply a lot to distribution centres of supermarket chains. There, even a small delay can have consequences. This is why we are working together to investigate the possibilities of ICT Group's 'last mile' solution, aimed at providing our customers with real-time updates on their





shipments. That would improve our service substantially."

### Valuable support

Plenty of future developments to look forward to, but how does PolarPack view the current situation? "We are very satisfied with the collaboration with ICT Group. They have a lot of knowledge of USoft platform and understand the possibilities and limitations. They give us excellent advice and also dare to challenge us. What's more, they help us in continuously improving and developing the platform, and we don't have to worry about management. USoft also gives us a flexible platform. That makes it easy to develop new functionalities, automate a wide range of manual processes and the tooling is ideal for building customised solutions."

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### Want to know more about this case?



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