



## Digitization gap closed

**With the P'X Retail Solution from Perspectix, the Rewe Group is closing a digitization gap between the CAD planning of stores and the area planning of the assortment of goods in its Rewe stores nationwide. The efficiency gains in construction or conversion of stores alone justify the investment. The project, which is of strategic importance for the future task of digitization, improves communication between central and regional functions as well as the cooperation with furniture suppliers.**



Interview with:  
Klaus Wiens  
Functional Division Manager Real Estate  
Construction Branch Storeconstruction  
REWE Group



Founded in 1927 and organized as a cooperative, the Rewe Group is one of the leading trade and tourism groups in Germany and Europe. With a turnover of 24.5 billion euros (2019), more than 148,000 employees and over 3,600 Rewe stores, Rewe Markt GmbH

is one of the leading companies in German food retailing. "Every year, around 100 full-range stores are newly built in Germany," reports Klaus Wiens, functional division manager for real estate, construction, branch store construction at Rewe Group. "In addition, there are around 250 concept conversions of stores, which are revised and newly furnished.

### Digital layout planning as a challenge

In both cases, the construction department with project managers, external architects and a team of CAD planners create the floor plans of the REWE stores in "Computer Aided Design" with the AutoCAD software. The CAD team then adds furniture and product displays to the floor plan according to the requirements of the respective sales concept. Spatial peculiarities and regional differences are taken into account as well as fire protection requirements or optimal walking routes for customers. The centrali-



zed space management also contributes the space measurement key and the planograms to the assortment planning of the spaces with the range of goods using software that, in addition to rules and sample specifications, facilitates implementation on site. In the six regional organizations, these are transferred from store layout teams to specific stores. However, no software was previously available for this purpose, but printed CAD plans as well as pencils and erasers. "Due to numerous change loops, manual product group planning had to be transferred to the software for each store again and again," says Klaus Wiens. In 2014, therefore, the basic requirement from space management was to close this digitization gap.

#### Extensive selection project

In the following two years, all potential software vendors were thoroughly evaluated by a project team consisting of the space management and construction departments and the IT subsidiary Rewe Systems. In discussions, presentations and finally workshops with the providers and the employees concerned, a program was sought that best met the requirements of all three areas. Perspectix was shortlisted with its P'X Retail Solution. It combines store planning and furnishing concepts, merchandising and assortment planning in a single end-to-end solution. Based on the CAD floor plans, digital twins of the stores are created, which are fitted with store design elements using powerful 3D catalogs. During assortment planning, the planograms are placed on the respective product carriers via drag & drop and visualized in the 3D environment. The required number of product displays is automatically adjusted according to the planned layout, thus avoiding over- or under-ordering. Further views show brands, suppliers, sales, margins or categories of products and provide further potential in the form of analysis options.

#### Software with intuitive-GUI

By the end of 2016, the decision was clear: Perspectix' P'X Retail Solution had prevailed in the final selection. "The user guidance of the P'X Retail Solution is so clearly superior to competing products that the software is in a different league in terms of user-friendliness," says Klaus Wiens. "This was decisive for us, because the best system is only of any use if the users accept it." The very good functionality fully met the known requirements of today and the future: "We are not yet planning with 3D technology today," says Klaus Wiens. "With regard to the developments in Building Information Modeling (BIM), this could change in a few years. With Perspectix we can take this step at any time without any problems".

#### The customized setup

With the starting signal for the implementation, the task of customer-specific adaptation including the filling of the catalogs with several thousand furnishing objects was set. In order to successfully solve this task, the know-how of the suppliers was required. Many suppliers saw a win-win situation in the fact that they could enter their own elements of shelving systems, checkout counters, refrigerators, freezers and service counters, along with the associated logic, into the catalogs themselves. Klaus Wiens found a suitable project manager for this in the civil engineer and BIM specialist Thomas van der Broeck, so that in 2019 he could start customizing a range of furniture that has since been updated. "We were very pleased that all suppliers jumped on this bandwagon and in some cases even used their own licenses of the P'X software to virtually replicate their products"; says Klaus Wiens. "In the meantime, we are receiving images of the real furniture that we can configure according to the rules. Storebest in particular, as supplier of the shelving systems for the dry goods range,

#### About Perspectix

Perspectix AG in Zurich implements sophisticated software solutions for technical sales and store planning. Since its foundation in 1996, the company has continuously developed into the technologically leading solution provider for sales and project planning of variant-rich products. Users of the P'X Industry Solution benefit from experience in complementary user industries: mechanical engineering, plant engineering, electrical engineering, furnishing, shop fitting, storage and logistics systems. With the P'X Retail Solution, users receive a tailor-made solution for store planning, product range design and store evaluation. Thanks to the combination of sales optimization, graphic project planning and product lifecycle management in a forward-looking technology, Perspectix is today a strategic supplier to well-known manufacturers and retail chains as well as a partner to leading IT companies.



played a major role in this. The various shelf widths and heights and their compartmentalization can now be adapted to the floor grid using parameters. This eliminates the need to count out all the shelves: "With the placement, the P'X Retail Solution provides complete parts lists with the components to be ordered," says Klaus Wiens happily.

#### Regional roll-out

Perspectix supplied a preconfigured server that is now operated in the Rewe data center. The six regionally distributed construction departments access centrally maintained data: "The central data storage and a national facility library means a considerable increase in efficiency for us," reports Klaus Wiens. "We can now update the furnishing catalogs overnight, and when colleagues start their system, they automatically use the right components." One after the other, each of the six sales regions will be introduced to the new working method in a three-day workshop. "The roll-out is really successful, we have already eliminated many difficulties of various kinds in advance with Perspectix," reports the project manager. "A big advantage was that we were always able to address the developers at Perspectix directly." The introduction project is to be completed in all regions by December, so that regular operation can begin after a learning phase.

#### Greater efficiency thanks to digitization

It is already becoming apparent what benefits will be

### About REWE Group

The cooperative REWE Group is one of the leading trading and tourism groups in Germany and Europe. In 2019, the company achieved a total external turnover of around 63 billion euros. REWE Group, founded in 1927, is present in 24 European countries with more than 360,000 employees.

The sales lines include supermarkets and consumer markets of the brands REWE, REWE CENTER as well as BILLA, MERKUR and ADEG, the discounter PENNY, the drugstores BIPA and the DIY stores of toom. Added to this are the convenience stores REWE To Go and the e-commerce activities REWE Lieferservice and Zooroyal. The Lekkerland Group comprises the Group's wholesale activities in the field of on-the-go supply. Under the umbrella of DER Touristik Group, the travel and tourism division includes the tour operators ITS, Jahn Reisen, Dertour, Meiers Welt-reisen, ADAC Reisen, Kuoni, Helvetic Tours, Apollo and Exim Tours and over 2,400 travel agencies (including DER Reisebüro, DERPART and cooperation partners), the hotel brands Iti, Club Calimera, Cooe, PrimaSol and Playitas Resort and the direct tour operator clevertours.com.

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gained simply by closing the digitalization gap in store layout. Once the CAD department has set up a store, the store layouts can move the mapped assortment back and forth as required - the labeling is always retained. When the process is complete, finished layout plans, parts lists and the planograms are ready for retrieval. "This great advantage alone justifies the new acquisition," explains Klaus Wiens. "Only from the phase of digital creation of the furnishing plans did we calculate a business case with a payback period of just under two years".

#### **Bidirectional connection with AutoCAD**

The CAD department is free to place the furniture in the familiar AutoCAD environment or in the P'X Retail Solution: the entire furniture library can also be placed in the CAD system in the form of CAD blocks. By linking to the AutoCAD symbol library, even the layout planning is reproduced in full: When you

reopen the AutoCAD plan edited with P'X, the breakfast cereals are in the right place. "The complete, bidirectional data connection was an important advantage for us because it allows us to continue using our familiar CAD environment," comments Klaus Wiens.

#### **High strategic importance**

As part of the major future task of digitization, Rewe is intensively involved with BIM. In a real BIM system, buildings and equipment would have to be based on a common data model. "Therefore, it is an important strategic advantage that P'X, our BIM system for sales, has an excellent connection to AutoCAD," concludes Klaus Wiens. "We see the introduction of the P'X Retail Solution as an important digitization project. We are convinced that we will achieve further major performance gains".