



Vetter

## Groundbreaking, resilient and flexible: automated warehouse made to measure

Vetter Pharma-Fertigung GmbH & Co. KG has now put its new automated materials warehouse for pharmaceutical packaging into operation. Renowned intralogistics provider STILL was entrusted with analysing, advising on and planning the logistics processes as well as with implementing the warehouse project. Going forward, the use of automation will ensure increased warehouse capacity, safety and flexibility in the company's internal logistics processes.



**Sector:** Pharmaceutical industry

**Company:** Global leader in aseptic filling and packaging of pre-filled injection devices. More than 5900 employees, turnover of around EUR 900 million in 2022

**Challenge:** Increase in capacity and utilisation limits of the distribution warehouse.

**Solution:** Analysis, consulting and planning with respect to the logistics processes and project implementation of an automated warehouse.

**Products:** Automated STILL MX-X iGo systems very narrow aisle trucks and automated STILL EXV iGo systems high lift pallet trucks. Integration of assistance modules such as iGo pilot navigation, truck terminals and FTS software into the existing IT and logistics systems.

## Vetter – a pharmaceutical service provider

Vetter is based in the town of Ravensburg in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, and is one of the world's leading pharmaceutical service providers for the aseptic filling and packaging of pre-filled injection devices such as syringes, cartridges, and vials. This international, family-owned contract manufacturer aseptically fills the injection systems with liquid medicinal products produced by pharmaceutical companies in its clean rooms, packages them and stores them in its cooled warehouse Ravensburg West, also known as RVW 1, where they are kept until distribution. In 2022, the company along with its 5900 employees achieved a turnover of around EUR 900 million.

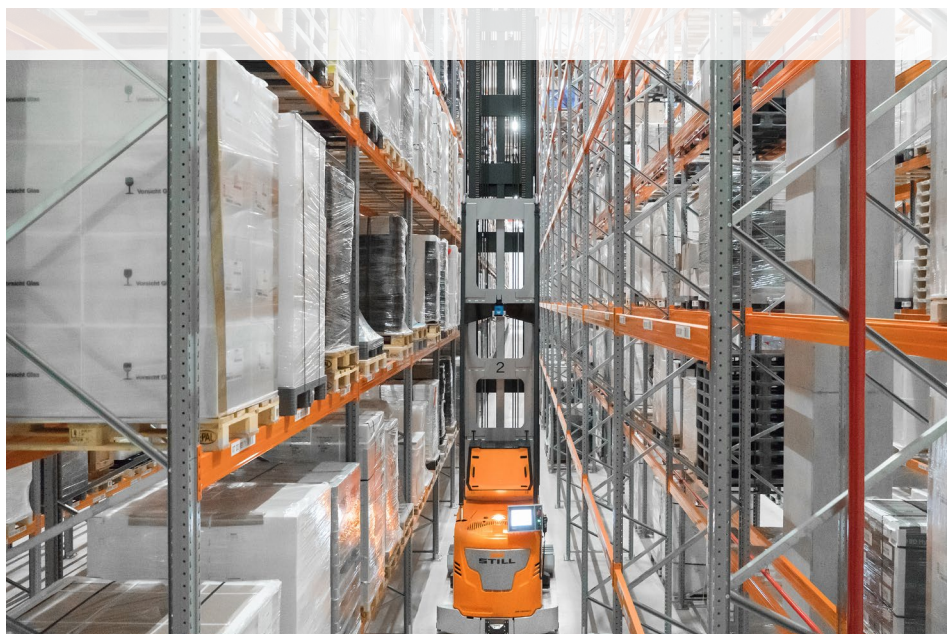
## Automated raw materials warehouse for pharmaceutical packaging

The successful family firm is constantly expanding. As a result, the RVW 1 distribution warehouse soon reached its limits. Vetter responded by commissioning the planning of a new warehouse facility and subsequently putting those plans into practice. The new warehouse is being used to store pharmaceutical packaging for the various Vetter products. Dr Michael Schmitz, Vice President of Logistics at Vetter: "Thanks to our LOG 29 logistics strategy we have been able to invest in automation at just the right time. The commissioning of the STILL automated warehouse is a real milestone in this respect. The key to the success of the project was the input provided by highly-skilled individuals on both sides. That meant we were able to quickly come together and find solutions to unexpected challenges. We worked hand in hand to develop the best possible logistics solution for our new warehouse and put RVW 2 into operation on schedule."

**"The commissioning of the STILL automated warehouse is a real milestone [...] We worked hand in hand to develop the best possible logistics solution for our new warehouse"**

Dr Michael Schmitz, Vice President of Logistics at Vetter

→ The fully automated RVW 2 materials warehouse provides greater certainty for the company – on the one hand with respect to the supply of goods to production sites and on the other with respect to the shortage of skilled workers and growing cost pressures.





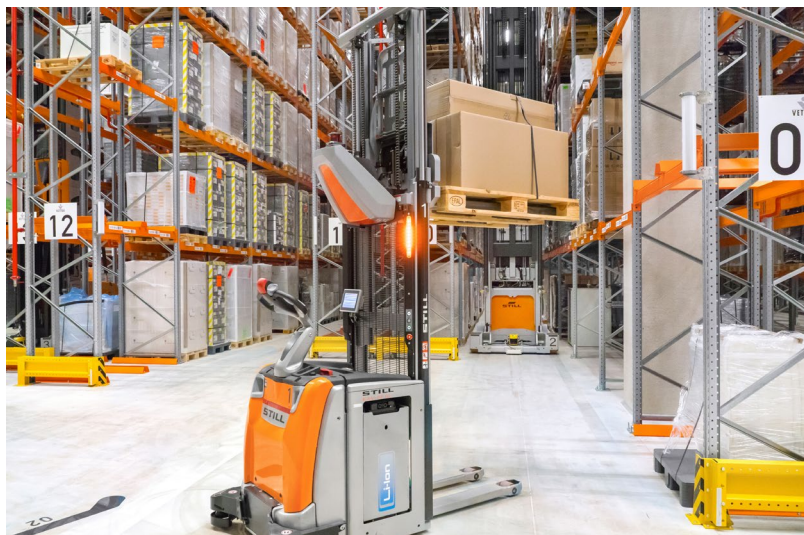
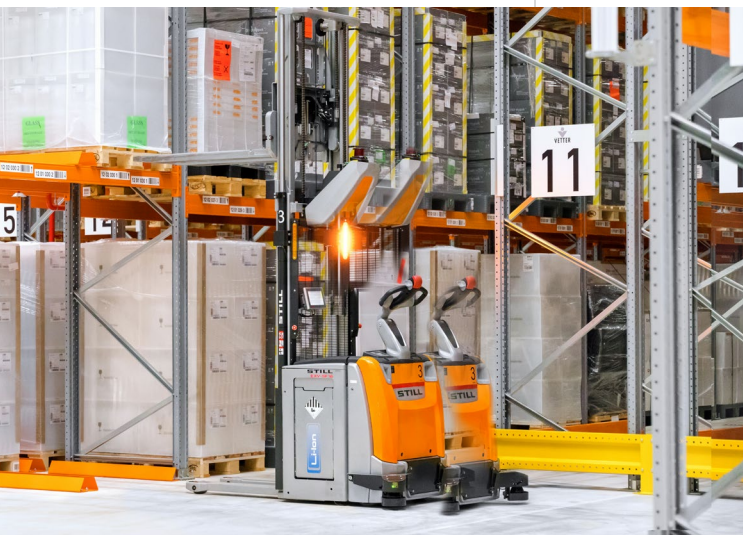
## In-depth analysis, optimisation and planning of logistics processes

From thorough definition of requirements and comparison of multiple master concepts to detailed planning, STILL analysed, optimised and precisely designed the logistics processes together with Vetter. Bernd Geiger, Intralogistics Consultant at STILL, explains: "In the first phase, we assessed and compared various automated warehouse systems using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) regarding the required throughput and the warehouse space available in relation to the capacity needed to store the materials. The in-depth analysis revealed that industrial trucks were the best option for transporting goods around the raw materials warehouse and order picking area of the pre-storage hall. This allowed us to implement much more flexible processes compared to a stationary solution using conveyors." In the second phase, the automated raw materials warehouse and all the related systemic requirements were hashed out in detail together with Vetter.



**" Compared to a stationary solution using conveyors  
we can implement much more flexible processes"**  
Bernd Geiger, Intralogistics Consultant at STILL

↓ The process simulations carried out based on STILL's data analysis revealed that industrial trucks were the best option for transporting goods around the raw materials warehouse and order picking area of the pre-storage hall.







## Made-to-measure and rapid commissioning of RVW 2

The STILL racking system with 16,200 pallet bays was planned, supplied and installed in line with Vetter's needs. Four MX-X iGo systems very narrow aisle trucks take care of vertical storage and retrieval processes quickly and safely with the help of the iGo pilot navigation smart assistance system. Four EXV iGo systems high lift pallet trucks are used for horizontal transportation of pallets. Jan Urbarz, Team Leader for Warehousing and Operations at Vetter, stresses: "As a result of the thorough planning and collaboration with STILL, the automated warehouse was commissioned on schedule within just 18 months from creation of the initial concept. The automation systems are tailored to our requirements. What's more, the solution is economical as well as easily and flexibly scalable thanks to the option to introduce additional vehicles in the event of a rise in demand."

↓ The pallet to be stored is taken up by the EXV iGo systems high lift pallet truck. Its shape and dimensions have previously been measured on the conveyor line to allow its position in the STILL WMS to be determined automatically.







Tobias Trunk, Operations Manager for Intralogistics Solutions at STILL, adds: "When it comes to process automation, our wealth of experience and the proven capabilities of our industrial trucks form the basis for the successful commissioning of systems. We deploy our trucks within automated goods flows for the precise tasks they have been optimised for."

The project manager is responsible for coordinating the various areas such as factory planning, small trade and suppliers for the hall equipment as well as for the implementation of the entire intralogistics system.

Time schedules for the various areas and integration of the different IT systems were coordinated during shop floor management and four fixed meetings.

### **Seamless integration of IT systems**

The two companies worked together to program the warehouse and fleet management interfaces. As a result, vehicle assistance modules such as iGo pilot navigation, truck terminals and AGV software were easily integrated into the IT and logistics systems at Vetter. Anna Lisa Sauter, Team Leader for Processes and Systems at Vetter, emphasises: "During the test phase for interface programming, so before the go-live phase, data and processes in the warehouse were made available to the Vetter host system under real-life conditions, i.e. the code for a test environment was transferred to the production environment. During this phase, STILL helped us using a piece of simulation software that allowed us to thoroughly and comprehensively test the transmission of data from the warehouse management system."

## Smart data analysis

The iGo systems trucks are controlled and monitored using the fleet control system. This generates a huge quantity of valuable data around the clock that is used to conduct a thorough analysis of the processes from a top-level perspective.

STILL offers a cloud-based analysis tool in the form of the iGo insights software. It can filter correlations from all the process information collected and recommend specific measures. Christian Boos, Head of Logistics at Vetter, is already looking to the future: "We will be able to run additional shifts in order to keep up with increasing requirements. The smart tool iGo insights allows us to further optimise the availability and performance of our automated fleet."



**„ More than half of our customers are looking to automate processes [...] We are responding to this growing demand with quick-to-implement, scalable automation solutions.“**  
Patrick Litz, Head of Intralogistics Solutions bei STILL

**Roll the film!** Groundbreaking, resilient and flexible: automated warehouse for VETTER, made to measure by STILL



## Summary

The pharmaceutical service provider Vetter has achieved its objectives with the RVW 2 warehouse. Dr Michael Schmitz: "The RVW 2 materials warehouse has provided greater certainty with respect to all our internal logistics processes – on the one hand it has ensured a frictionless supply of goods to our production sites and on the other it has helped solve problems relating to the shortage of skilled workers and growing cost pressures."

STILL offers various truck-based extension levels for the automation of intralogistics systems that can be individually adapted to the customer's requirements. Patrick Litz, Head of Intralogistics Solutions at STILL, summarises: "More than half of our customers are looking to automate processes that are currently being performed manually in the near future. We are responding to this growing demand with quick-to-implement, scalable automation solutions. The smart assistance and automation systems for our industrial trucks are highly efficient, user friendly and future-proof. You can always rely on us as a partner, as we pride ourselves on our close relationship with customers."

STILL GmbH  
Berzeliusstraße 10  
22113 Hamburg, Germany  
Phone: +49 (0)40 7339-2000  
Fax: +49 (0) 40 7339 2001  
info@still.de  
**www.still.de**