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Balmain Hair Group and Exact

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I now have  
insight into the  
work situation  
of all colleagues  
worldwide"

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# ALWAYS OPTIMAL OCCUPANCY IN THE WAREHOUSE THANKS TO EXACT



Fulfilling a woman's ultimate hair dream. That is the aim of Balmain Hair Group B.V. The family business, part of French fashion house Balmain, is specialised in hair extensions. Ideal for women who want a fuller look, or longer hair. "It is fantastic hair, very glamorous and the results can be seen instantly," beams general director Steward Guliker. "The high-quality product's recognition is increasing at higher-end hair salons. We want to show hairdressers that there is an entire target group that wants extensions. Our aim is to get hairdressers to think outside of the box," he adds. Balmain has six locations worldwide. In addition to the Netherlands there are also locations in Germany, France, England, America and Hong Kong.

## **Complex situation and missing information**

Balmain Hair Group previously had an external partner for their logistics processes. Back then, it was difficult to meet the high expectations of customers when it came to delivery speed or the processing of returns. The information was very scattered and processes were unclear. In addition, Balmain Hair also had hardly any insight into what colleagues were doing in other countries. In 2009, Balmain took control of the logistics process. "We are meeting the same targets. And doing it even better, too," says Guliker proudly. The organisation of the company, which has been growing over the last ten years, is spread over different countries. Now there are

deliveries to Belgium, Spain, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Poland and Denmark from the Netherlands. "We are a relatively small organisation, but have multinational issues," says Guliker. Balmain receives support from Exact International with making international choices in the area of logistics or technology. The contact with Exact International functions as a sounding board at application level. "They are a direct link when I have to make decisions," says Guliker. "This is very valuable for me! For instance, I was advised to opt for the Microsoft Reporting Services from them." Lean companies avoid double work; they get it right the first time. Errors in delivery, invoicing and administration cost a lot of time and money and lead to dissatisfied customers.



Balmain Hair Group uses Exact to carry out all activities rapidly and accurately. This is essential for an organisation whose clientèle includes very prominent stylists.

### Always adequate stock

Balmain Hair Group's warehouse process consists of different steps. Guliker explains: "Firstly, all item information comes together, from which a report is generated. Then information is gathered via Exact Synergy on marketing, sales, promotions and possible offers. The head of logistics compiles the order every fortnight on the basis of this information. In the background the purchase order is automatically sent to our own factory in China. A single hair extension is available in 12 to 24 colours. These are purchased on location, where subsequently the orders can be picked." The company has four warehouses globally: in the Netherlands, Brighton, San Diego and Hong Kong. "Firstly, a report is made from all item information. Subsequently, information is gathered about marketing, sales and offers. On the basis of this information a purchase order

is automatically sent to our own factory in China.

Thanks to Exact we have all the tools in house to get the logistics process of the products to run smoothly," says Guliker. "Now, for example, there is always adequate stock of the different products. And the forecasting function allows the company to predict the needs of a customer for an extended period of time."

### Optimal occupancy

Thanks to WMS, the shelves in the warehouse are organised on site. The system shows where the product can be picked. The warehouse staff combine the product demand from multiple orders into one single pick instruction, also called batch picking. In doing so, fifteen orders can be picked all at once. Manual checks are performed to see if the system is correct. "It works really well, because the number of errors is almost down to zero now," states Guliker. The bulk stock is on mixed pallets. Extra products are stored there until there is more demand for them. "After all, hair does not rot," says Guliker.

### OLD SITUATION

Balmain Hair Group previously worked with an external party that facilitated the logistics process for them. This made it hard to meet the expectations of customers in terms of delivery speed, processing of returns and response times. Information about customers and orders was scattered and could not easily be retrieved. There was also insufficient insight into the work situation of colleagues in other countries. In addition, the processes were unclear.

### THE SOLUTION

In 2009 Balmain Hair Group decided to take logistics into its own hands to improve efficiency. This could be achieved with Exact Globe and Exact Synergy. Exact Globe is used for the logistics and financial organisation. Exact Synergy is used to gain additional insight into the workflows of colleagues globally. In addition, all information about customers and items is combined in a transparent way in Exact Synergy Enterprise. "I want to have as few players at the table as possible. And this is possible with Exact. It's a great tool, which allows us to manage everything well," says Guliker.

## BENEFITS

- **Optimal logistics: from receipt to delivery**
- **99.7 percent stock reliability**
- **Transparent process management: all information comes together**
- **Support from Exact International when making choices**
- **Order before 3 p.m. and it is delivered the same day**
- **Management insight into the progress of the company, from any location and at any time, including foreign branches.**

With Exact's help, the warehouse has an optimal occupancy of 1100 pallets. E-WMS guarantees delivery performance and orders per person, among other things. WMS also uses cross docking, where the incoming stock is immediately dispatched to distributors in all other European countries.

### Realtime information

Balmain has made use of Exact Event Manager for some time now, which has resulted in a major improvement in efficiency in the area of customer service from the start, for example. This problem is automatically detected when a delay in manufacturing is expected. All colleagues involved receive a prompt warning and can immediately inform the customer. "This type of realtime information is crucial for the responsible department and is essential for a good customer service," Guliker explains. "Customers expect us to return their call within 2 hours, to deliver within 24 hours and to process a return within 2 days.

Before using Exact, we were not as strong in that area as we wanted to be. We are now!" In the future, Guliker also wants to use central Master Data Management (cMDM), which ensures that all data can be entered and maintained at one single central location. "We really need the program, so that all locations work with the same data."

### Web store integration

With the B2B E-commerce portal, a web store, stock and financial administration are combined in one single program. E-commerce is an important new development for Guliker to reach its customers "Salons and our distribution partners expect this from us. That is why we certainly wish to make this online development." For some time now, Balmain Hair has been focusing more on social media and website development. "In this way we can interest far more customers in our brand!"

## Facts

Name of Organization	: Balmain Hair Group B.V.
Number of employees	: 51 in the Netherlands, 103 worldwide
Number of Exact users	: 123 Synergy users, 83 Exact Globe users
Active Exact product lines	: Exact Globe and Exact Synergy
Sector	: Wholesale
Focus areas	: International, Logistics, WMS, B2B E-commerce Portal
Implementation time	: Prompt payment, efficiency and reduced stock write-off
Website	: <a href="http://www.balmainhair.com">www.balmainhair.com</a>