

Portucel Soporcel, Portugal

Portugal's leading paper and pulp producer, Portucel Soporcel Group, uses fully automated paper reel and pallet transportation and storage with 20 Rocla AGVs and an automated battery exchange station in its paper mill.

Portugal's leading paper and pulp producer, Portucel Soporcel Group, bought an automated guided vehicle solution from Rocla in 2008. The deal was part of the company's new paper mill in Setúbal. This location is one of the world's largest paper mills for the production of high-quality office and printing papers. The installation covers around 20 vehicles for transporting reels from intermediate storage to sheet cutting and taking pallets from sheet cutting to wrapping. The system also includes an automated battery exchange station (BES) and will be extended with 12 additional vehicles for the intermediate storage.

The vehicles were shipped to the new paper mill in May–June 2009. During the summer, the reel logistics of the new converting plant were commissioned and interfaces with the mill's control systems and various machine lines were established as planned.

As production at the new paper mill started, fully automated reel logistics using the latest generation of Rocla AWTs and our automated BES were also ready to automate production in the converting area.



"After evaluating many AGV suppliers, we chose Rocla for their advanced technological solution and having the best total package."

Carlos Lopes,
Project Area Manager,
Portucel Soporcel



Coveris Rigid Finland



Plastics packaging manufacturer Coveris Rigid Finland is part of the sixth-largest plastics packaging entity in the world. The AGVs in Hämeenlinna factory work in three shifts, handling several tasks. MetRo warehouse management system controls the traffic flow and takes care of the work queue. Coveris has opted for a long term rental agreement from Rocla.

The transport system of six AGVs in was delivered by Rocla in 2013. The ATX12 automated guided vehicles are designed for standard pallet and cage handling and transfer operations. They move between the warehouse and production units, and they are able to lift pallets and cages up till 1.8 meters height and handle load-on-load operations. For navigation the AGVs at Coveris use laser triangulation.

“The process starts with the AGVs picking up cages, pallets and cardboard containers from the warehouse, and taking them to our production area where molding and printing happens. The materials also need to be transported between the various production units, and the AGVs take care of this. When everything is ready, the AGVs pick up the pallets and cages from production, usually loading two of them on top of each other. The AGVs then take the load to a stretch wrapping machine and when wrapping is done, the pallets and cages are delivered to the warehouse”, describes Juhani Karhunen, Technology Manager at Coveris Rigid Finland.

In addition to the automated guided vehicles Coveris has Rocla MetRo warehouse management system in use. When an AGV is needed for example to take the cages from the printing unit for wrapping, the operator places an order to MetRo system and the vehicle chosen by the system arrives to pick up the order. MetRo is tailored to provide all the reports needed, and it also keeps a record of all the service calls.

All the AGVs at Coveris are named after women: Marilyn, Evelyn, Patsy, Rita and the rest of the vehicles move continuously on the corridors of the production facilities and in the warehouse. As the factory operates in three shifts, the AGVs are in use almost constantly. When the battery needs to be changed, the vehicle automatically goes to the changing station and an operator changes the used battery to a fully charged one. In addition to buying an AGV system, it is also possible to rent it from Rocla. Coveris opted for long term rental.



“instead of two AGVs, we now have six of them. As we work in three shifts, using AGVs helps us in cutting the material handling costs significantly. It is easy to understand that a similar non-automated transport system would require a lot of people to drive the forklift trucks.”

Juhani Karhunen,
Technology Manager,
Coveris Rigid Finland