
PostNL opens automated sorting centre for small parcels

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PostNL's CEO Herna Verhagen and Prince Constantijn van Oranje open a fully automated, robotic parcel sorting centre for small parcels in Nieuwegein, the Netherlands.

This innovative sorting centre, equipped with diverse robots, is unique in Europe and has been created especially for sorting and country-wide distribution of small parcels. Expanding its delivery capabilities is a top priority at PostNL. Earlier in the year, PostNL opened a regular parcel sorting centre in Westzaan.

The parcels processed at the sorting centre are the size of a good-sized shoebox or smaller. Small parcels mean less packaging material, less air and fewer carbon emissions.

Parcels Director Liesbeth Kaashoek comments: "By processing small parcels separately at this sorting centre, we're creating more capacity in our regular parcel sorting centres."

The maximum capacity of this automated sorting centre equals that of five regular sorting centres. This is how we're making ready for the further growth of e-commerce and for serving our customers and consumers going forward."

Robots and data

PostNL is increasingly making more and smarter use of data, digitalisation and robotisation.

The sorting process at its small parcels sorting centre involves a variety of innovative tools and techniques, including 175 robots for internal transport, robotic arms to correctly place parcels on conveyors and at postbag filling stations. Small parcels are sorted 24/7 and intelligent software facilitates precise tracking of every single parcel at the sorting centre.

Making the e-commerce chain sustainable

Aspiring to make the e-commerce chain more sustainable together with its partners and innovation start-ups and scale-ups, PostNL launches an innovation programme in close collaboration with Deloitte and in the presence of Prince Constantijn van Oranje, who, together with Techleap, is promoting the Dutch technology ecosystem and helping ambitious and promising Dutch tech companies to grow both domestically and worldwide.

The aim of the innovation programme is to make the entire e-commerce chain sustainable, from check-out at the web shop to delivery on the doorstep.

PostNL wants to make it easier for its business customers and consumers to make greener choices and is looking to achieve this by taking air out of packaging, delivering even more efficiently and sustainably, combating waste by reducing returns, and promoting and facilitating circular solutions.

(PostNL)