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Operations Director, Swizzels Matlow



## Swizzels Matlow optimises supply chain performance with Manhattan Associates

### AN ESSENTIAL REPLACEMENT

Alfred and Maurice Matlow started Matlow Bros. Ltd. in 1928 with the production of a range of jelly sweets. Five years later, the two brothers together with David Dee, formed Swizzles Ltd to specialise in the production of fizzy, compressed tablet form sweets which developed into the present day nationally-known range of Love Hearts, Drumstick and New Refreshers. In 1975, the company adopted the 'Swizzles Matlow Limited' title to symbolise the complete integration of the two companies.

Today the family-owned business employs in excess of 500 people whilst its distribution centre (DC) at Adlington in Cheshire processes over 1,000 pallets of stock per week. The prior system, which purely managed stock location within the DC, was a paper-based system which meant that staff had to re-enter information into a computer resulting in mistakes and a duplication of effort. The business was growing through an increase in customer demand and the supply chain team was concerned by the limitations of this manual approach.

“We had a reasonable handle on the location of stock, but the existing manual system had no link back to a computer—it was entirely paper-based,” explained the operations director for Swizzels Matlow. “We did not have a clear picture of what was happening at any given time and this was creating inefficiencies. We were missing the visibility offered by a warehouse management system and the logic that it applies when issuing task instructions. Re-keying information can lead to mistakes which, in a warehouse environment, can impact customer service levels. That is not good for business and as we were enjoying an increase in demand, it became essential that we upgraded our system.”

### TICKING ALL OF THE BOXES

Swizzels Matlow conducted a thorough review of the market and short-listed five suppliers. Each one offered a standalone warehouse management system. The software needed to be flexible, intuitive and reliable.



**Distribution centres:** Adlington, Cheshire

**Manhattan solutions:**

Manhattan SCALE™:  
Supply Chain Architected for Logistics Execution

### Challenge:

Equip business for growth with advanced warehouse management system.

### Goal:

Optimise inventory management, improve task management and increase operational efficiency.

### Solution:

Standardise Swizzels Matlow's distribution operations on Manhattan SCALE platform.

### Result:

Tighter stock control, increased productivity, improved operational efficiency.

Explaining why Manhattan was selected over its four competitors, the operations director revealed that, "It was clear that Manhattan has a strong product that met all of our requirements. The company has an impressive client-base, which reassured us of the quality of the solution. In addition, Manhattan's market reputation is second to none—we had convincing testimonials from existing customers. Breadth and depth of functionality as well as flexibility were all important elements, but the final decision was based on the strength of the Manhattan team and the confidence we had that they truly understood our requirements."



*"We fully expect the company to continue to grow, so the plan for the future is to further expand the warehouse to ensure that we can cope with demand. We are confident that the Manhattan solution is flexible enough to expand with us and will continue to keep our warehouse running smoothly and efficiently."*

**Operations Director, Swizzels Matlow**



Swizzels Matlow deployed the warehouse management system alongside an expansion of the distribution centre, which saw capacity increase by almost 10%. The company also invested in radio frequency picking technology supplied by Zetes, which was integrated with the Manhattan solution.

"We got the staff involved in the project right from the start and they were very keen to move away from the paper system," explained the operations director for Swizzels Matlow. "We had a Manhattan consultant on the ground for three months in the run-up to the go-live. We also trained three "super-users" who then rolled it out to a further 20 staff, which was supplemented by a four-hour training session. Following the go-live, we were back up to capacity within just two days which we were delighted with."

## GREATER CONTROL OF STOCK

Since implementing Manhattan's software, Swizzels Matlow has recorded improvements in inventory accuracy and service levels provided to customers. Tasks are more tightly controlled by the Manhattan system and they can be bundled, meaning operatives can perform picking and put-away tasks simultaneously to save on travel time within the warehouse.

"We have been able to streamline operational efficiencies to the extent that it has shaved hours off completing tasks," said the operations director for Swizzels Matlow. "Tasks are much more targeted and, as we have visibility into who is doing what, we can redeploy resource much more logically. Overall, this has meant that we have been able to provide a better quality of service to our customers, which is fundamental to our reputation."

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