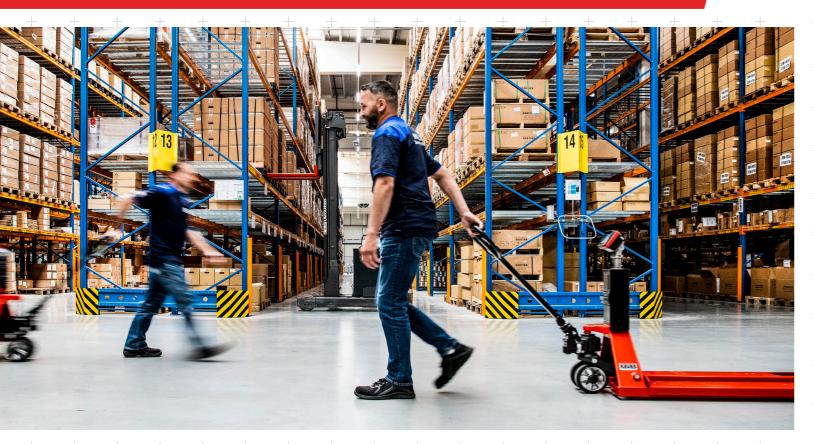# From weight into profit

Weighing goods on warehouse trucks while transporting them is a process that opens up many new possibilities in the management of intralogistics. Magdalena Futyma, Sales Executive Poland at RAVAS Europe BV, in an interview with Witold Zygmunt, reveals the secrets of mobile weighing solutions and talks about how to transform weight data into profit for the company.

Mrs Futyma, please introduce our readers to the history of RAVAS. Where does the company come from and when did it start to operate?

RAVAS was founded in Utrecht, the Netherlands, by Raphael van Seumeren back in 1965. At that time, the company dealt with the distribution of DAF trucks and all their accessories: specialized seats, built-in loading cranes, etc. In the 1970s, a new truck accessory was added to the range: the built-in weighing system. On-board scales have proved to be an efficient alternative to weighbridges. Thanks to them, unnecessary travel back and forth between silos and truck scales was eliminated.

How RAVAS and its product range has evolved over the years?

Undoubtedly, the 1980s was the key period for RAVAS. In 1986, RAVAS began manufacturing hand pallet trucks with integrated scales and thus became a pioneer in this field. Since then, RAVAS has been developing new techniques that help us maintain our leading position in the European market and create products that create value for our customers. We are aware that end-users have great trust in our products. Therefore, we remain committed to maintaining our exceptionally high standards.

When did RAVAS appear in Poland? How do you assess the development potential of our market?

RAVAS has been operating in Poland for many years. At first, we were represented by the importer, and since September 2013 there has been a Polish branch of RAVAS. We see great potential in Poland - the forklift market looks great compared to the global or European market. In addition, we can see a dynamic development of the logistics services market in our country. And the global situation prompts companies to implement innovative solutions, based on advanced technologies and process automation.

What was the idea behind creating solutions based on scales integrated with internal transport devices? What is their advantage over the use of traditional scales?

The main advantage of mobile scales over traditional ones is greater efficiency and optimization of internal processes, whether in a warehouse or in production. The mobile scale gives the possibility of weighing loads while transporting them. So instead of one operation, we can perform two. It also saves space in the warehouse, as well as time - with traditional solutions we are wasting a lot of it travelling to a stationary scale.

What does a typical mobile weighing solution consist of?

A typical mobile weighing solution always starts with a specific application such as order picking or transhipment. Depending on the

Magdalena Futyma - Sales Executive Poland

needs, RAVAS offers a suitable mobile weighing system. This means that the scale is integrated or mounted on the warehouse track. The final element in developing the solution is depending on it what the customer wants to do with the weighing data generated by the mobile scale. This data can be printed as well as transferred in real-time to the ERP, WMS or TMS system.

What benefits do customers who already use RAVAS solutions value the most? Does it often happen that customers order larger quantities of scales after a pilot purchase?

Profit. Sometimes as savings resulting from the minimization of costs, and other times it is pure profit. It is also important to save time, and nowadays time is money. Another issue noticed by our clients is full control over processes and optimization of performed tasks. It is much easier to sell more scales to the same customer.

RAVAS

Often, after a few weeks of using RAVAS scales, customers can see the benefits of using them, which results in the decision to buy more devices.

What type of trucks can RAVAS scales be used in? Is it possible to install mobile scales in the equipment already in use?

RAVAS scales can be mounted on any model and brand of warehouse truck. We select the weight model depending on the type of trucks and the customer's needs. Of course, the trucks that are already used by customers can also be equipped with a RAVAS scale, so there's no need for additional investment.

Does RAVAS only fit scales on trucks from other manufacturers, or do you offer your own, complete devices?

RAVAS is not a manufacturer of forklifts, we work in cooperation with manufacturers of these devices – also on OEM level with eight of the largest suppliers of forklifts in the world. We can provide scales for forklifts, high-storage trucks and lifting trucks of all manufacturers. However, we offer several models of scales integrated into RAVAS hand pallet trucks, including the EX version.

The weight alone is not enough - RAVAS emphasizes that, above all, it wants to offer complete weighing systems. Please describe one of them, e.g. Cross-Docking solution.

The RAVAS Cross Docking solution enables the registration and control of the weight and volume of incoming palletized goods and the integration of this data with a WMS or ERP system. In addition, this data can be used to invoice surpluses and optimize load factors.

Pick by Weight system is another solution that draws our attention. We already know other picking solutions, such as Pick by Light or Pick by Voice. How is Pick by Weight different from them?

All three systems are designed to support the picking process, but only RAVAS Pick by Weight gives you the ability to check picking correctness and correct picking errors right at the point of error and in real-time. This greatly reduces costs by eliminating the need for final checks. Remember that the lack of picking errors affects not only the financial account but also the company's image.

How scales mounted on trucks can communicate with ERP or WMS systems?

RAVAS scales can be equipped with RS232, Bluetooth module or WIFI module to enable communication in a preferred way with ERP or WMS systems.

Does RAVAS also provide its own IT systems and applications, dedicated to managing weighing processes?

Yes - and I think this is the main factor that gives us an advantage over other scales

manufacturers. Depending on the needs and technical capabilities of the client, we offer advanced tools, including RAVAS Data Manager (RDM), used in the Pick by Weight solution discussed earlier. Another solution is RAVAS Integration Software (RIS), often used e.g. in Cross Docking operations and allowing easy integration of RAVAS mobile scales via Wi-Fi with any ERP or WMS system. Of course, we also have the RAVAS Weights App for smartphones or tablets, which has a summation function, allows you to add all gross weights and control the total weights. All data is stored in CSV format and can be emailed to any inbox as an attachment using 3G, 4G or WLAN.

Weighing is a process that must guarantee high accuracy. How often should your scale be calibrated and how does the calibration process look like in practice?

RAVAS scales maintain weighing accuracy over a long period of use. It depends on whether we use the devices correctly. RAVAS recommends checking the scales once a year. On the other hand, if the customer is in possession of a balance with legalization, it is not RAVAS as the manufacturer that decides when the customer has to legalize the balance, but it is indicated by legal regulations. The law in force says that the original manufacturer's legalization is valid for the next 2 calendar years, excluding the last month. Subsequent re-legalization is valid for 25 months from the date of legalization. We have a local service, we carry out scales inspection, calibration, secondary legalization or repairs for our clients.

Finally, can you take a look into the future: what will be the most important task for RAVAS in the years to come?

Creating Intelligence - as data appears to be of increasing importance in both logistics and industry. We see large growth and dynamic development in these areas, to which we respond with our

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