



# DHL BOOSTS EFFECTIVE SERVICE TIMES OF PARCEL LOCKERS BY 80% WITH GREENPLAN

DHL's 'Packstation' network enjoyed huge productivity gains after the facilities management team revolutionized dispatch operations and technician planning schedules with the aid of Greenplan

**E-commerce is about speed, efficiency and reliability, which means every part of the chain, without exception, needs to be completely rock-solid. If a single link in the chain breaks, the impact on the process, and more importantly on customers, can be hugely damaging to the company's reputation, not to mention that customer's future loyalty.**

German parcel giant Deutsche Post DHL offers a nationwide network of unmanned locker sites, known as 'Packstations', where customers can both send and receive

parcels conveniently by following simple instructions. There are currently over 12,500 Packstation sites, and the success of the system means that the number continues to grow. 3,000 were added in 2022 alone, with 16,000 Packstations expected to be available in the medium term. Given such ambitious growth, Packstations need to offer a reliable, functioning experience for customers. DPDHL Facility Management Deutschland GmbH (FMD), the facilities management arm of the wider DPDHL group, is responsible for the maintenance and servicing of the Packstation network – it needs to ensure all matters are



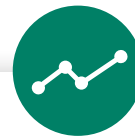
## CHALLENGE

- To create a more transparent, accountable work process for Packstation technical engineers
- To spot and harness greater efficiencies while the network pursues ambitious growth targets
- Previous dispatch and schedule planning over-reliant on significant manual resources



## SOLUTION

- Tour planning software combining workforce management and route planning
- Cuts needless driving time
- Ensures compliance with agreed working hours
- Drives optimization by working across separate route district boundaries where appropriate
- Enables more precise planning and timing of 'jobs' and tasks



## RESULTS

- Technician site visits increased from three to seven per day
- Clear understanding of timing expectations per task leading to more productive effective service times (+80%)
- Business well positioned to manage service requirements from expected sharp growth in sites and units

handled quickly and efficiently, using its nationwide team of about 100 technicians, split into four German regions. In 2022, over 112,000 tickets were issued. Typical tasks include replacing print labelling rolls, repairing faulty locks and fixing damaged doors.

## THE CHALLENGE: ENHANCING TRANSPARENCY AND EFFICIENCY

In 2020, FMD managers wanted to find a solution to improve their dispatch operations as part of a wider drive towards greater transparency and efficiency. Tasks were complex and planning required substantial manual input – over 80 dispatchers organized the planning of schedules and appointments for the technicians. Once out on the road, the technicians managed their own routes and schedules, without central oversight. This decentralized system led to inefficient use of technicians' working hours, with some perhaps spending more time travelling than actually present at the increasing number of Packstation sites. This had an obvious impact on their productivity and on managerial supervision of their performance, as managers did not have a fully transparent grasp of their technicians' whereabouts or the time required for each specific task. "We needed to create a much more precise, visible and accountable system," explains FMD Contract Manager Andreas Kassner.

## PLANNING SOLUTION

The answer was Greenplan, a holistic tour planning software that both digitalizes and optimizes the dispatcher role. Field service efficiency measurably improves, because the system selects the best tour route and starting time as well as the best order of stops to suit both local traffic restrictions and overall mileage costs. Order fulfillment rate rises because each technician's compliance with work time regulations is externally visible, while the manual dispatch resources can be freed up to serve other parts of the business. Greenplan is also able to plan each day ahead more efficiently because it can oversee all jobs within a longer time frame and can break them down most appropriately to suit specific tours. Originally founded within DHL as part of a collaboration with the world-renowned Mathematics Institute at Bonn University, Greenplan started working with FMD in

summer 2021 to gain a deeper understanding of their precise requirements. This led to a pilot in the Hamburg region kicking off in the autumn of that year. Effective service times for Packstation saw a huge upward shift of 80%, and a similar increase in the number of fulfillments per technician (from three to five per day initially), leading FMD to approve a go-live in two out of five regions in summer 2022. Further successes ensued, with the nationwide go-live implemented in March 2023.

"The transparency provided by Greenplan has provided us with precise learnings in terms of case and job times," reports Marcel Hardenack, FMD Product Manager. "We now have a very clear idea of the specific length of time it should take to replace a label roll, for instance, and Greenplan will build that precision into the number of jobs allocated for the day." This precision is one reason why technician 'job' visits are now up to seven per day, from a lowly 3 per day under the manual scheme. Schedule planning is also tighter and more up to date. "Cases can be reported up to 8pm in the evening on any given day," explains Marcel Hardenack. "Greenplan then prepares the schedules overnight according to that data, ready for the technician to start work at 7am or 8am, depending on their agreed hours." FMD is delighted with the productivity improvements and resource efficiencies provided by Greenplan. "We are now fine-tuning the business rules and prioritizations with Greenplan experts, who are always available and on-hand to help with queries and issues. "This helped us ensure that the IT systems were interacting robustly before the nationwide roll-out," says Andreas Kassner.

Plans for the future include further expansion into Austria and Switzerland, as well as to other branches of the DHL family.

## ABOUT FMD

- FMD is the real estate and facilities management arm of DPDHL Group, the home of two globally famous brands, DHL and Deutsche Post. One of FMD's varied roles is the technical management and servicing of DHL's 'Packstation' network, a parcel collection and dispatch service for businesses and domestic consumers.