

Case Study

Sensormatic Solutions Inventory Intelligence Insights



Retail chain, Comic Stores, improves their inventory accuracy and internal operations with Sensormatic Solutions TrueVUE Inventory Intelligence Platform.



Both Comic Stores outlets in Malaga offer a wide variety of merchandise, ranging from an ample selection of classic and cult comic books, memorabilia and clothing such as t-shirts, badges, stickers and many more. Many of those items are unique and high value comic books and merchandise. The Malaga flagship store covers 400m² of space, and the other outlet is approximately half of that size (200m²).

During its 20+ years of operation, Comic Stores has become one of the most popular specialised shopping destinations and a meeting point for comics, manga and science-fiction enthusiasts in southern Spain.

Business Challenge

Since its opening, Comic Stores have been faced with the typical challenges found within its industry. With a high number of expensive "collector" pieces and limited floorspace, the stores have encountered several issues including misplaced items and the fast change of new stock paired with many returns to suppliers.

The set-up of two stores in one city (Malaga) was expected to facilitate the traffic and stock exchange between the two stores, however it was often difficult to keep track of the inventory and ship desired items from one store to the other.

Additionally, since Comic Stores offers a "buy online, ship to home" option not only in Europe, but also across America, Asia and Australia – they needed a reliable and real-time view of their inventory to realise the shipments in a timely matter.

There were three major challenges that Comic Stores wanted to focus on while piloting and implementing the RFID solutions:

SUMMARY

INDUSTRY: Specialised retail stores

SOLUTIONS: RFID Inventory Visibility

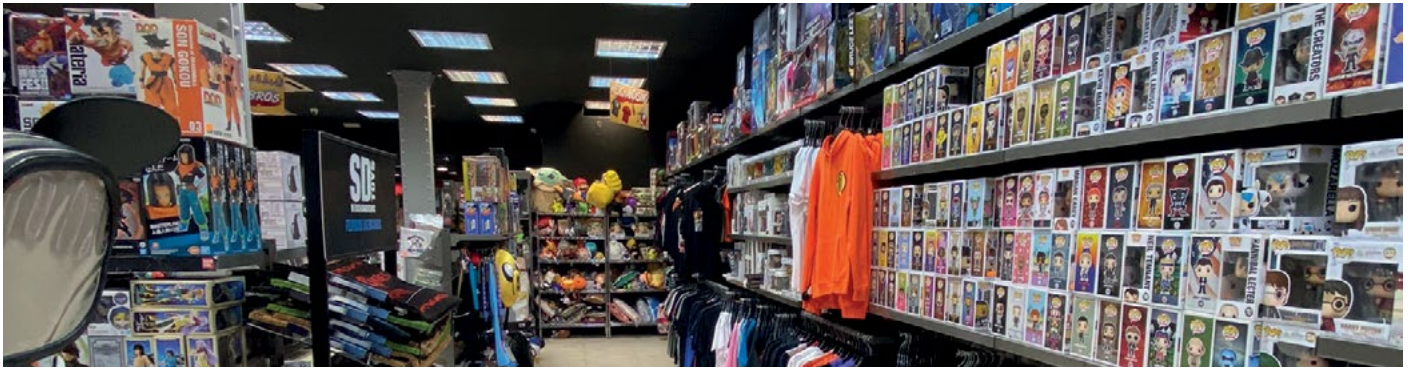
BENEFITS:

- Fast and easy weekly inventory counting
- Inventory visibility for large number of small and unique items (comic books, memorabilia and clothing)
- Quick search on misplaced items
- Operational improvements, for example easier item transfers between stores
- Enabling Click & Collect and Online Fulfillment

Comic Stores features four specialised retail stores spread across southern Spain. Their two biggest stores are located in Malaga, covering approximately 600m².

For more information visit: www.comicstores.es

Inventory Accuracy	Have an up-to-date view of inventory powered by RFID and TrueVUE analytics that shows store associates what exact items are on the shop floor and which are out-of-stock, to deliver a positive shopper experience. Full visibility over stock across all four stores, enabling easy shipment and exchange between stores.
Inventory Location	Quick location identification for specific items via a search function using modern handheld readers to locate hard to find merchandise. Searching for misplaced items and enabling "buy online, ship to home" option.
Shrinkage	Gaining a real-time understanding of what, when and how specific items go missing by analysing item-level inventory and loss prevention data in order to lower shrinkage throughout the stores.



Sensormatic's Inventory Visibility Solution

Sensormatic's Inventory Intelligence team was approached to assess the viability of the RFID solution for Comic Stores.

The assessment followed the 4-step approach:

1

Site Survey

A physical site visit to the store to understand the store layout, merchandise displays, furniture (e.g. metal shelves or any objects that may interfere with RFID readers).



2

Selection of Tags and the Tagging process

Identifying a selection of merchandise that needed to be tagged and an outline of what the tagging process will look like.



3

An understanding of the targets the customer wanted to reach

In the case of the Comic Stores, the main targets included:

- Improving inventory accuracy up to 98%.
- Implementing a search function for easy item location and misplaced items
- Understanding shrinkage



4

Initiate a pilot phase and evaluation of the initial results and business insights

Implementation

As part of the pilot phase, over 35,000 items were tagged in Malaga's 400m² flagship store.

Since the store has no backroom or storage area, everything on the shop floor is its full inventory.

Due to the different forms of merchandise, several tags were used to protect the inventory:

- RFID Paper Tags (both for inventory and loss prevention purposes)
- Dual RF/RFID Hard Tags
- RFID Tags for bagged items

Following a successful pilot, Comic Stores rolled out Sensormatic's tagging solutions across their second Malaga store where an additional 20,000 items were tagged, totaling up to over 55,000 items RFID-secured between both stores.



"Once we implemented Sensormatic's RFID solution across our two shops, it became unthinkable for us to go back. In addition, we also want to continue to advance with this technology by implementing it to support more processes in our daily work and expanding it across all our stores.



The technology has enabled us to improve the speed of customer service – previous tasks that took anywhere between 10–30 minutes to complete, have now been cut down to 2–3 minutes. At the beginning, our customers were surprised to see that we have this implemented this solution, but they quickly experienced the many benefits and now they are thrilled with the speed and support we are able to give them thanks to RFID technology."

Pablo Díaz
Vice Managing Director, Comic Stores

The results

During the pilot phase, Comic Stores quickly started to see the benefits of implementing RFID solution. The biggest value from an operational point of view is the ability to carry out weekly inventory checks efficiently and improving stock accuracy to the level of approximately 98%.

Additional benefits included improved customer service and the fulfilment of online orders.

Comic Stores' journey with the RFID is far from being over. As next steps, the company is planning a full integration of the Sensormatic IQ TrueVUE Platform with their POS and ERP systems to get further insights on their inventory, shrink patterns and shopper behaviour.



Fast Forwarding Retail

About Sensormatic Solutions

Sensormatic Solutions is the leading global retail solutions portfolio of Johnson Controls powering operational excellence at scale and enabling smart and connected shopper engagement. Our intelligent digital operating platform – Sensormatic IQ – combines the full Sensormatic Solutions portfolio, including third-party data to deliver unmatched insights into shopper experience, inventory intelligence, loss prevention and operational effectiveness with advanced technologies, like AI and Machine Learning. This enables retailers to act on prescriptive and predictive data-driven outcomes to confidently move into the future.

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