



Case study: Henry Colbeck



Henry Colbeck

As the oldest independent supplier to the fish and chip industry in the UK, family-run Henry Colbeck Ltd has proudly served the sector for over 120 years.

Their diverse range of over 1,500 products, including frozen foods, oils, packaging, and cleaning materials, supplies customers from independent fish and chip shops to large fast-food outlets. Henry Colbeck is known for its reliable next-day delivery and exceptional customer service from distribution centres in Gateshead and Coatbridge, making efficient inventory management critical to their success.

"We've been around for over a century and have seen the industry evolve dramatically. But one thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to our customers. They rely on us to get them the products they need, on time, every time. Ensuring we can fulfil this promise is why we're constantly looking for ways to improve our supply chain," explains Callum Belshaw, Lead Buyer at Henry Colbeck.





The challenge

Henry Colbeck faced significant challenges managing their vast product portfolio with varying demand patterns. Balancing stock availability without overstocking had become complex and time-consuming thanks to outdated purchasing processes.

Their ERP system, Microsoft Dynamics Business Central (BC), relied heavily on printing and manually editing stock forms, resulting in inefficiencies and both overstocks and stockouts, ultimately impacting cash flow.

"We had been using Dynamics BC for six to seven years, but its out-of-the-box inventory management was somewhat limited," says Callum. "One of our biggest issues was excess inventory, which was tying up a lot of warehouse space and working capital. We also struggled with stockouts, especially during seasonal fluctuations in demand."

Recognising these challenges, Henry Colbeck set clear goals: to become more data-driven, enhance operational efficiency, and prepare for the retirement of a long-serving purchasing veteran. To achieve this, they needed a solution that could automate replenishment, reduce excess stock, and improve forecasting accuracy.





The solution

Henry Colbeck knew that EazyStock's functionality made it the obvious choice to automate their inventory management and reduce reliance on manual tasks. Its seamless integration with Dynamics BC to enhance operational efficiency was the icing on the cake.

"The fact that EazyStock integrated so seamlessly with Microsoft Dynamics BC was a huge plus for us. We were worried about the transition, but it went smoothly. We were able to start optimising our inventory almost immediately," shares Callum.

The Henry Colbeck team wanted a connection with their software provider to enable them to build a strong working relationship. Knowing they would have a dedicated customer success manager ticked another box for the team.

“We’ve seen major improvements in the way we manage our inventory. EazyStock has made it easier to stay on top of stock levels and has really optimised our entire process. It’s massively improved our business overall, and we’d highly recommend it to any company struggling with inventory challenges.”

Callum Belshaw
Lead Buyer





EazyStock's forward forecasting and advanced algorithms have improved demand forecast accuracy. Comprehensive forecasts now consider demand types, product lifecycle, trends and seasonality rather than relying on historical data. As EazyStock flags outliers and abnormal demand, Callum and his team can review and adjust forecasts as necessary. The automated optimum order recommendations and comprehensive alerts suite give the Henry Colbeck team confidence that their stock is in great hands.

Purchasing Assistant Ellie Freckleton emphasises the importance of automation saying, ***"EazyStock handles our replenishment automatically, saving us hours of manual work. The risk of run-out report helps us track stock levels effectively, so we can prevent stockouts before they occur."***



The results



The results

Since implementing EazyStock, Henry Colbeck has achieved remarkable improvements across its supply chain:



10-15% reduction in excess stock

By leveraging EazyStock's intelligent replenishment features, Henry Colbeck reduced overstocking by 10-15%, freeing up warehouse space and enhancing cash flow.

"Our stock holding has reduced by around 10-15%, and this reduction in stock hasn't impacted availability.

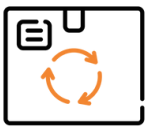
We're tying up less cash, and our offsite storage needs have also come down," says Callum.



Improved forecasting accuracy

EazyStock's advanced forecasting tools empowered the team to predict demand more accurately, particularly during seasonal fluctuations. This has helped to reduce stockouts significantly while ensuring optimal stock levels across distribution centres.

"We've been able to align our stock levels better with demand, and EazyStock's forecasting tools have helped reduce the risk of stockouts," explains Callum.



Automated replenishment saves time

Automating replenishment tasks has drastically reduced the time spent on manual stock monitoring and ordering.

"We no longer need to print out 200 pages and check stock manually every day and try and find a certain piece of paper again", adds Ellie.

EazyStock's order calendars feature allows the team to set up customised order calendars, adapting to supplier schedules, seasonal demands and even planned downtime. This flexibility ensures that orders align with supply needs while accommodating holiday periods, factory shutdowns, and peak demand events like Easter.





Streamlined operations and focus on growth

Optimised inventory processes allow the team to focus on value-add tasks and strategic initiatives rather than daily stock management, improving efficiency and productivity.

“We’re now more efficient, and our stock management is much smoother. It’s given us time back to focus on more strategic growth areas,” says Callum.

Onboarding and support

The onboarding experience with EazyStock truly impressed the Henry Colbeck team. Beginning in November 2023, they received tailored training sessions led by Head of Customer Success UK and Benelux, [Mark Chapman](#), and Senior Customer Success Manager, Marek Glaszewski.

“Mark and Marek were incredibly supportive. They conducted training both on-site and via Teams, fitting our schedules perfectly. This flexibility made a huge difference in getting everyone up to speed,” shares Callum.

Ellie admits she was initially sceptical about the new system. *“I constantly double-checked everything because I wasn’t used to this level of automation. As I gained confidence, I realised how much easier my job had become.”*

Mark’s proactive support was essential. He didn’t just solve problems; he educated the team to help them understand the system’s logic. *“It’s not just about fixing issues; Mark took the time to explain everything, which made a big difference in our learning,”* says Ellie.

EazyStock’s data-driven insights are now central to Henry Colbeck’s purchasing. The reports available to the team have replaced the informal checks they previously relied on, increasing confidence. For example, the risk of run-out report enables the team to proactively prevent any items from stocking out.

“EazyStock feels like another member of our team. It formalises our processes, ensuring we don't miss critical stock management tasks,” explains Callum.

Mark adds, ***“Our goal is to ensure our clients feel confident using EazyStock. We build partnerships where they can lean on us as a resource for continuous improvement.”***

After going live, the team transitioned from weekly to monthly check-ins, striking the right balance between support and independence. ***“Communication has been excellent. We can reach out anytime and always receive a prompt response. It feels like a true partnership with EazyStock,”*** states Callum.

This effective onboarding and ongoing support empowered the Henry Colbeck team to leverage EazyStock fully, driving significant improvements in operational efficiency.

Implementing EazyStock has allowed Henry Colbeck to tackle the complexities of supply chain management effectively. By optimising inventory levels and automating replenishment, the company has enhanced forecasting accuracy to free up cash, reduce storage costs, and meet customer demand precisely.

“We’ve seen major improvements in the way we manage our inventory. EazyStock has made it easier to stay on top of stock levels and has really optimised our entire process. It’s massively improved our business overall, and we’d highly recommend it to any company struggling with inventory challenges,” concludes Callum.





Find out more

To find out how EazyStock can help your business, get in touch.

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