

Ohio Success: Bleckmann Case Study

Bleckmann Builds First U.S. Distribution Center in Central Ohio

Over the past few years, some of the world's most recognizable fashion, lifestyle and home-goods brands have opened operations in central Ohio. The region's logistics infrastructure and proximity to markets make it an ideal location for corporate offices, back-office operations, and fulfillment and distribution centers. When executives at Bleckmann, a third-party logistics and distribution company based in Europe, wanted to establish a North American presence, they chose Ohio over neighboring states for the site of their first U.S. distribution center.

COMPANY PROFILE

Bleckmann is a Dutch-Belgian company that provides extensive logistics, distribution and supply chain services to the fashion and lifestyle retail and e-commerce industries in Europe. The company employs about 1,500 people at 22 sites in Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom as well as at its newest location in the United States near Columbus, Ohio.

BUSINESS NEED

Bleckmann co-owners Johan Milliau and Steven Rymenans wanted to expand the company's operations into the United States after securing long-term agreements in multiple states to provide logistics and distribution services. As a third-party logistics provider to the retail and e-commerce industries, the company needed a distribution center in a location accessible to American markets, an available workforce and a strong transportation infrastructure. Company executives considered sites in Ohio as well as Indiana and Pennsylvania.

OHIO SOLUTIONS

Bleckmann ultimately chose a site in Johnstown, about 25 miles northeast of Columbus. Ohio offered the logistical, workforce and business climate assets that co-owners Milliau and Rymenans were seeking. It had something else they liked: strong support from local, regional and state agencies to launch their U.S. operations in Ohio.

PROJECT STATS

- **Collaborators:** Columbus 2020, JobsOhio, Johnstown and GROW Licking County
- **Total capital investment:** \$3.5 million
- **Jobs committed:** 200

"After a detailed analysis, we concluded that Columbus was the ideal location to serve the United States, from the East Coast to the West Coast."

Steven Rymenans, Group Strategy Director and Co-Owner



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