

PRESS RELEASE

24 October 2017

Katoen Natie Pioneers Driverless Truck at ExxonMobil's Integrated Petrochemical Complex in Singapore

Katoen Natie, the Belgium based industrial logistics group, has started operating its first driverless truck at ExxonMobil's world-scale integrated manufacturing site in Singapore, transporting products between the company's packaging and intermediate storage facilities.

The pilot truck will operate on a 24/7 basis moving some 250,000 tons of product annually. After a six-month test run, the project will be gradually expanded to 12 trucks, moving some 3 million tons of product annually.

Mr. Koen Cardon, CEO of Katoen Natie Singapore, said, "We combine engineering, technology and logistics operations to offer innovative and tailor made solutions to customers in a variety of sectors. This project is a perfect example of the innovation we bring to the forefront to create value for our customers as well as creating the opportunities to upgrade the skills of our workforce."

"We are excited to support Katoen Natie in making this innovative breakthrough in chemical logistics, and helping the world envision how the future of transport will look like," said Damian Chan, Executive Director, Energy & Chemicals, Singapore Economic Development Board. "The transformation of our industry cannot happen without a well-trained and future-ready workforce, and Katoen Natie's commitment to retrain and upskill their workers exemplifies Singapore's continuous efforts to ensure our talent is ready to take on jobs of the future."

Mr. Robert W. Johnston, ExxonMobil's Singapore Chemical Plant manufacturing director said, "Driverless trucks are an example of how the industry continues to adopt automation to improve worker productivity. We are glad to be supporting Katoen Natie in its efforts to safely operationalise new and innovative solutions at our manufacturing site."

Mr. Cardon added, "We operate 165 logistics terminals in a network of 36 countries. We selected Singapore as the location for this project given that it has both the vision and the right business environment to undertake such projects. Our partnership with the Economic Development Board has been of key importance for the realization of this project. In addition, many other parties including a team of MBA students from the Singapore Management University (SMU) and the IE Business School have been pivotal for this project."

SMU's Associate Professor of Operations Management (Practice), Professor Lieven Demeester, who guided students in his previous role as Associate Dean of MBA Programmes commented, "We are proud of our MBA students. They helped Katoen Natie identify the technology partners, initiate a productive collaboration between them, and assure the financial viability of the project."



OUR PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

KATOEN NATIE

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Katoen Natie also worked with Dutch industrial VDL Groep as partner for this project, who carried out the truck conversion and automation at its local VDL Automated Vehicles technology centre here in Singapore. Mr. Theo Toussaint, Executive Vice President of VDL Groep, said, “We’re delighted to partner with Katoen Natie in this driverless truck project. The ambition of VDL is to become the leader in electric and automated heavy-duty vehicle applications and we see this project as another big step towards our goal.”

Since establishment in Singapore 20 years ago, Katoen Natie has developed many new solutions in Singapore that includes safety inspections by drone, transport management through a specially developed mobile phone app and a range of new technologies in packaging and shipping operations. Mr. Cardon said, “The pilot driverless truck project is not an endgame but a milestone in a wide range of innovative solutions that we are introducing for our customers worldwide. Our Singapore operations have become a centre of excellence for Katoen Natie which will enable us to create value for our customers across the world.”





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About Katoen Natie

With facilities in Europe, the Far East, North and South America and Africa, Katoen Natie is a global supplier of logistics and distribution services.

Katoen Natie combines engineering, technology and port operations to offer worldwide, tailor-made solutions to the chemical and automotive industries, and to the consumer goods, electronics & retail sector.

Katoen Natie has built up considerable know-how in serving the petrochemicals industry with extensive experience we design, build, operate and maintain specialized facilities for handling different product types.



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