

Blancheporte (3 Suisses International Group), one of the historic brands in French distance selling, is a witness to the textile industry's globalisation. Its value chain is founded on the excellence of its Transport-Logistics service and relies on a high-performance Customs service.

### **AEO status, the ultimate for Declarants**

Blancheporte acquired the advantageous AEO, Authorised Economic Operator, status by demonstrating their complete conformity with customs and tax legislation. In an international environment rocked by the threat of terrorism, the European Union has reinforced international supply chain security. Since 2009, international trade operators have been required to transmit advance entry and exit declarations for the purposes of "security" risk analysis. This strengthening of controls can have a detrimental effect on the fluidity of exchanges, if operators are not well-organised. However, thanks to CONEX's customs software solutions and its professional expertise, Blancheporte was able to obtain the AEO status and thus benefit from a real competitive asset: **fewer controls on goods at the borders, meaning a faster supply of goods to better satisfy consumers.**

### **20 years of collaboration**

A long and rich history unites the client and its supplier. Pierre-Yves THIEUW arrived at Blancheporte 20 years ago and took part in the creation of the "third country" Customs service, which until then had been 100% out-sourced to forwarding agents. Confronted by volumes of imported goods which never ceased to grow, Blancheporte decided to take a bet on **the savings the company could make by internalising the declarations**. But the challenge had to be negotiated with care...

Pierre-Yves THIEUW is a Customs professional who arrived just at the right moment: he has considerable experience acquired working for a forwarding agent in the region. The context is one of complete upheaval: with the suppression of borders within the EEC in preparation for the 1st January 1993, the activities for actors who manage cross-border traffic is about to be called into question. With Blancheporte, Pierre-Yves THIEUW has found a career opportunity with a bright future.

**“In 1992, Blancheporte took the huge step forward towards internalised customs clearance. The flows only concerned importation and at a single delivery site , but we had to start from scratch from a customs software point of view”,** explains the customs manager. “In 1992, CONEX was already well-appreciated for its know-how. In addition, the decision was taken to favour market software packages over an internal IT development. If the geographical proximity in the North of France helped in terms of the service provided and the various exchanges required, the decision was taken more for the modernity of the CONEX solutions, their user-friendliness, and for the support our teams would receive during the implementation of these new tools.”

In 20 years, Blancheporte and CONEX have dealt with, even anticipated, all the amendments imposed by Customs modernisation, the evolution of the regulations governing textile industry trade or the upheaval in the work methods and sourcing imposed by the development of e-commerce. The relationship has strengthened over time: “For ease of use and data security and reliability, we have since opted for new modules proposed by CONEX over the years: NCTS arrival notification, regulatory surveillance, Encyclopédie Douanière (Customs encyclopaedia), and so on,” explains Pierre-Yves THIEUW.

In 2012, Blancheporte buys the majority of its goods in Asia and the around the Mediterranean, in Morocco, Tunisia and in Turkey. Smaller quantities come from the European Union and France. **The 6-member Customs service treats some 7000 files per year.**

After the arrival of the French Customs on-line service, DELTA, which was anticipated by the company – by setting up a precursory IT tool for the electronic transmission of declarations between French Customs and CONEX well ahead of schedule – after ICS which fell under the responsibility of Blancheporte's Transport service, today a new stage is beginning for the company's Customs team: the mutualisation of the service with the other members of the 3 Suisses International Group. Not to mention the electronic storage with probative value, which represents another short-term project for the team. One thing is certain: the next few years will continue to be busy for Blancheporte.