

RFID readers in modular Bybox box banks

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Tests have started on the new generation of intelligent drop-off box banks developed by ByBox and previewed in Fulfilment & e.logistics, issue 38. Unlike previous ByBox banks, each of which featured a pre-determined selection of different-sized compartments, the new design is modular, allowing box size within each installation to be varied if demand changes at given locations.

A significant innovation is that the new banks have RFID reading capability, making it possible to track

tagged goods placed in the box compartments automatically. This is seen as a significant advance on previous systems, since it now becomes possible to verify the presence of goods at a box bank, not just that someone made a delivery or collection there.

ByBox says this means that the distributed network of banks can become genuinely a virtual warehouse, in which items are visible wherever they are.

It has now been confirmed that the

computer embedded in each new box bank runs under a Linux core, which is said to use less power but provide more processing ability than its predecessor. Battery backup ensures that the unit can continue to operate for up to 14 hours in case of mains power failure.

The new design will be added to ByBox's existing network of 14,000 intelligent and "dumb" drop boxes at 750 UK locations, which feature in the company's own in-house nationwide pre-8am delivery service.