No. 3 European CE retailer Darty sees improvement in the 6 months ending 31 October 2014, with revenues growing by 3.5% Y-o-Y as the retailer continues to narrow focus on its core France, Belgium and Netherlands businesses.

In part such improvements come through the sale of majority stake in Datart, the retail business in Czech Republic and Slovakia. It also dropped loss-making operations in Italy, Spain and Turkey. As a result net losses for the 6-month period reach €4.7 million, an improvement from €19.8m last year, while operating profit totals €9.3m (against a €1m loss a year ago).

However sales drop by 1.2% due to "strong comparatives in Q2" and a "challenging" market.

The 6-month period also saw Darty open 22 franchise stores-- a number to increase to 50 by the end of the year. The retailer also plans to buy 18 "profitable" stores from HiM Retail in the Netherlands, an acquisition set to be completed by February 2015.

“Our growth initiatives in France are ahead of schedule. The franchise operation is rolling out faster than we first anticipated, the kitchen offer is already in over 70 stores and our web generated sales have increased by over 25% following the acquisition of Mistergooddeal.com," CEO Régis Schultz says. "The increase in our operating profit reflects the end of our restructuring plans in our core markets and the acceleration of our growth initiatives.

As for the future Darty plans to "remain cautious," at least in the short term, before maximising performance in the "important" peak period.

Go [Darty HY Results 2014/2015]