"Should the connection fail in lesser technological countries, the factory is able to keep running on RFgen regardless."

MOHAMED SEALI | INTEGRATION MANAGER

Provimi

Global feed manufacturer gains flexibility, scalability, and performance with RFgen.

At a glance...

Industry
Animal Feed
Manufacturing

Application
Shopfloor Automation
System

Environment
SAP

In more than 80 factories in 30 countries, Provimi manufactures animal feed concentrates, premixes, additives and specialties which are delivered to feed manufacturers worldwide. The Provimi company was formerly a decentralized organization. That was changed in 2007 when the organization chose the 'One – Provimi' strategy. Processes and systems are now gradually being unified and centralized.

The Challenge
Mohamed Seali is Global IS Operations and Integration Manager in the corporate Provimi IT department. He said, "We decided to use a global ERP system, SAP, in which the basic functionality is configured the same for all plants." Because the production machines operate different in the several factories, Provimi decided not to standardize the Production Control Systems. For the shop floor automation, Provimi chose explicitly for standardization. "Labeling and barcode scanning are complex processes with many dependencies. A solution for labeling and scanning should run smoothly as one integrated process. Because we often have to deal with changing laws and regulations, we would like to work in a standardized environment. If an adjustment is required due to legal regulation, we can make just one change instead of many changes for all the countries where the law applies," said Seali.

The Solution
The Rotterdam head office has been working for years with satisfaction along with RFgen's affiliated partner, Actemium. "Actemium has proven in the past they cannot only automate the process, but they can also add business logic to it. They could nclude the functionality we lacked in our previous ERP package. Furthermore,

they have an organization that can handle a global roll out. That is important because about every three months a new cluster of countries is going live on SAP including the shop floor automation consisting of the middleware application RFgen, Nicelabel and Metrack Manager. RFgen brings the ERP functionality from SAP to the shopfloor and Metrack manager adds user management, logging and reporting capabilities to it," Seali noted.

The Result
Provimi had four requirements for the Actemium solution: flexibility, manage-ability, scalability and performance. "We implement a standardized solution but local sites must have sufficient flexibility to do things in their own way. Despite these required adjustments, the application must remain manageable. This should not lead to a monster of an application," explained Seali. "Obviously the solution must be scalable. And perhaps the most important thing of all, the performance needs to be on a very high level. "It is unacceptable the production staff must wait for a label or a pick proposal. The problem is that manageability and performance are often contradictory to flexibility and scalability. It is a challenge to combine all four requirements."

Even with all of these factors, the result was successful. Actemium developed a blueprint that covered 80 percent of the needs of all sites yet left room for the individual sites to implement processes in a way most efficient to their operations. Because RFgen supported all of the critical business processes needed, it was decided to use it on the plant level to manage the barcode scanning and labeling systems.

RFgen

SAP runs on a central server where all sites login via a WAN connection. There is a real-time connection between RFgen and SAP. Should the connection fail in lesser technological countries such as Vietnam or Columbia, the factory is able to keep running on RFgen regardless.

Although the rollout in the first clusters was not entirely flawless due to the many dependencies, Seali is very pleased. Seali explained, "You know at the beginning you will encounter unforeseen difficulties because we were implementing SAP and the shop floor solution simultaneously. It required cooperation between RFgen, Cap Gemini (the implementation partner for SAP) and Actemium. That cooperation was very good. We always found a quick solution for issues and we learned from each implementation which made the next implementation a lot quicker. We ended up being perfectly on schedule."

About RFgen Software

RFgen Software helps organizations reduce supply chain implementation costs and increase accuracy and efficiency with the industry's most reliable and flexible mobile data collection software and supply chain automation solutions.

Enabling you to increase productivity by providing your mobile workforce with real-time and on-demand access to enterprise data, RFgen's mobile data collection solutions easily connect Windows, Android and Apple iOS mobile devices like barcode scanners, tablets, handheld computers, voice recognition devices and more to your back office ERP systems and databases, including Oracle's JD Edwards, Oracle E-Business Suite, SAP, SAP Business One, Deltek Costpoint and more.

In business since 1983, RFgen is known in the manufacturing and distribution industries for its solid, high-quality products and high customer satisfaction ratings among its more than 2,800 customers. With a global reach and local touch, RFgen and its network of more than 140 certified solution partners can support your organization no matter where your operations are located around the world.

North America
Corporate Headquarters
1101 Investment Blvd., Suite 250
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762
Phone: (888) 426-2286

www.rfgen.com