



CONTROL & AUTOMATION

SANDWICH PRODUCTION

Production Planning and Monitoring With INFORM

Millitec's latest project designed specifically for Raynor Foods is a production planning and monitoring system called INFORM. It seamlessly integrates the production lines with the offices in real time and without paper.

INFORM will handle all aspects of production from order quantities and production speeds right through to printing and applying labels in real time. It not only gives you the tools to improve the efficiency of your production but also the way to accurately assess the impact of any changes that are made.

The INFORM System

The system consists of a suite of software that runs on the office PC network, touch screen PCs located in the production hall, typically at the head of the line and at the labellers, large screen displays mounted above the lines and a data network that also links into the production machinery itself.

Additional modules currently in development will also feature touchscreen PCs in the ingredient prep areas and in order picking.

At the core of the office based system is a data base containing product details, ingredients, nutritional information, customers, orders, label designs, equipment in the production hall, available staff resource and the settings for the production machines.

Sandwich Production

Sandwich production is planned and scheduled by managers using the office based PC software. This production queue is immediately available on the touch screen PCs in the production hall. To start a production

run the line leader simply touches the touch screen PC and that order is loaded onto the production line. When the order is loaded to the line the machines are automatically setup for quantity of production and production speed with the collator speed changing to release bread at the required speed through the butterer onto the line and the production conveyor speed changing to suit.

As the new order progresses down the line subsequent machines will automatically adjust for the new settings, for example depositor weights will automatically change and the cutter height will alter on a servo motor to suit the new product. This makes product changeover extremely rapid and dramatically reduces rejects.

Each sandwich is tracked down the production line through the cutter and into the sealer and labellers. At the labeller an individual label can be printed for each sandwich with the label being customised to suit the customer for that sandwich. This all takes place automatically and reduces staff input and the potential for mislabelling. Typically the labelling conveyor has 2 top labellers allowing label stock to be changed ready for the next ranges without stopping production, and a single base labeller.



automatically added to the production run at the head of the line or, if that product has finished and a new product started, will be added into a shortages production run.

Widescreen video displays above each line let the line staff know the status of the current production run, how many products are left to make and also the upcoming production orders keeping all staff informed at all times. These large screens can also display the SOPs for the production of the current product with images.

Back in the offices the status of the lines and each order is available for viewing in real time on any PC on the network. Orders can be modified if required and this information is immediately downloaded to the production hall.

Production reports are generated at the touch of a button with real and 100% accurate data allowing managers to make informed decisions about the production process.

INFORM can also be linked to existing in-house systems as a source of production data.

Paperless Production Environment

A spokesman for Raynor Foods, Adam Newland, says: "INFORM allows us to have a paperless production environment with clear information for everybody. We get up to the minute data which we can alter without causing disruption to the production process. Different views on the production data can be obtained in different parts of the production hall."

INFORM stores product, ingredient and allergen information and calculates nutritional data for each product including all common nutritional label fields and sell by

Product	Qty	Left	Rejects	Status
CHEESE & PICKLE	112	0	0	OK
HAM & EGG-TW/CHEE & PICKLE-TW	44	0	0	OK
MAYO, HOT SMK SALM & CHE	68	4	0	OK
TUNA MAYO & LETTUCE	5	0	0	OK
TUNA MAYO & S/C	15	0	0	OK
TUNA MAYO & S/C	146	4	0	OK
NO SPREAD-DRY TUNA & CHE	23	23	0	OK
TUNA, C.FRAICHE, S/ONION & CHE	63	0	0	OK
PRAWNS IN MARIE-ROSE SAUCE	109	0	0	OK
CRAYFISH & ROCKET	76	4	0	OK
SLICED EGG, TOMATO & CHE-WHITE	81	0	2	OK
CHICKEN MAYO	10	0	0	OK
CHICKEN MAYO	27	0	0	OK

Viewing: MAIN LINE Production Date: 20/11/2007

Shortages View Other Line View Packing Info Move Run Rejects Make Shortages

Exit Change Production Date Change Assigned Lines Next Step Continue



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dates.

As well as a default product (RRP) and barcodes, individual customers can be assigned specific price and barcode lists allowing each customer pack to be tailored with their own barcode and retail pricing. It is even possible for individual customers to supply their own design label media and for this information to be printed on them.

INFORM is designed to handle the complexities that multi-part labelling can introduce. It stores each design configuration and matches them to make up a set for up to a 3 part label.

Other features include an inbuilt label designer with drag and drop down label design. This can be used to print labels by integrating with a print conveyor, or can be set to use any windows label printer available to perform the same job 'offline' in the office, simply select the date and production line and go!

"Communication is vital in a complex



manufacturing process like the sandwich industry, particularly with short production runs and multiple products to be made on each line, inform handles all of this communication seamlessly ensuring that everybody, and every machine, involved in the entire production process has the latest information and figures to ensure accurate production with the minimum of wastage,"

says Richard Ledger, managing director of Millitec.

"Inform is also a vital analysis tool giving the production manager real 100% accurate data on what has been and is happening in the production environment. What is more all of that data is easy to access with different reports being generated effortlessly. This means you can assess your production processes, make changes and analyse the actual impact of those changes." Richard Ledger continues: "Automatically captured data is always accurate and is effortless to collect, unlike manually collected data whose accuracy is not assured."

Adam Newland comments: "INFORM overcomes the communication and language barrier down the production line which in turn improves accuracy and efficiency. The statistical analysis of production data it gives us allows us to set and view response targets. INFORM is definitely the way forward." □



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

■ ADVANCED PLANNING & SCHEDULING

Preactor Adds 40 New Specialists to Leading Global APS Partner Network

Preactor International, the independent production planning and scheduling software company, has announced that more than forty additional companies have signed up as Preactor Partners since the beginning of 2007. The broad spectrum of countries represented by these companies including France, Germany, Russia, Italy, Netherlands, Ireland, Spain, Poland, Austria, USA, Canada, South Africa, Tunisia, Brazil, New Zealand, Australia, India, and the UK, demonstrates the truly international appeal of Preactor.

It also adds to the 300 Supply Chain experts already in this powerful network providing local implementation and support to the 2000+ companies already using Preactor as well as any future users. This is in addition to ERP solution providers that have already integrated Preactor with their systems.

Mike Novels, chief executive of Preactor International, explains why this is good news for manufacturing companies. "As the market for APS software matures and more and more companies recognise the benefits that it can bring, large multi-nationals are looking not only for a common solution that can be used in all its plants, but also a company that can provide the resources to implement and provide local support."

The fact is that very few specialist APS companies can offer such a service because

they don't have the experience and partner network to deliver a core global solution at a local level across international locations. Preactor International is in a unique position to do this because it has been building relationships with a wide range of specialist supply chain professionals for more than 15 years. These range from small consultancies, mid market ERP solution providers, MES distributors and Supply Chain Management system implementers.

"We continue to look for quality people with quality products to work with. Report after report from world famous analysts is showing that APS linked to ERP and MES



Mike Novels, Chief Executive of Preactor.



is the key to becoming 'Best in Class' in terms of lowering costs and providing excellent service levels to its customers," says Mike Novels.

Preactor International is a world leader in production planning and scheduling software used by a wide range of businesses. Frequently integrated with ERP, MES and Supply Chain Management solutions, Preactor's breakthrough technology is used by more than 2,000 small, medium and large multinational companies located in 64 countries.

Preactor has established partnerships with more than 340 companies located around the world to provide local expertise to support the implementation of the solution for each company. These 1000+ accredited professionals offer a key resource working closely with users to ensure each company's unique requirements are met.

With the combination of the largest installed base of proven APS solutions and the broadest network of expertise available around the world, Preactor claims to offer its clients the ability to provide world class planning and scheduling solutions, locally delivered □