



SAP mobile with MembrainPAS



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THE LEADING STANDARD IN ENTERPRISE MOBILITY & SHOPFLOOR-INTEGRATION

SUCCESS-STORY

No more transposed digits

Mobile inventory management and picking at ILLIG GmbH

At the end of the year, the machines of numerous companies stand still. The reason: the annual stock-take is about to start. Specifically, this means printing out paper mountains of stock lists, comparing them to the inventory, making handwritten notes and finally entering all the data back into the ERP system. This production downtime not only results in a large loss of turnover, in retrospect, it also turns out to be a time-eater. Manual data acquisition results in errors. Transposed digits and incorrect data cause problems in the ERP system, even months later. The Heilbronn-based mechanical engineering company ILLIG has turned this into a project. The objective: to introduce a mobile solution that makes stock-taking and picking fast, cost effective, simple and, most of all, error-free. In software developer Membrain GmbH, they found a project partner who could demonstrate many years of experience introducing standard software to production and logistics.

About ILLIG Maschinenbau GmbH

ILLIG is a leading global provider of high-performance machines and tools for thermoforming plastics and for solutions for the packaging industry. Business activities include development, design, production, assembly and commissioning of complex production lines and individual components. The Heilbronn-based company employs around 750 employees in subsidiaries and agencies in over 80 countries. An intelligent production and logistics system ensure that the components and spare parts are optimised as early on as possible and reach the customer the quickest way possible.

With more than 40,000 inventory-managed materials, stock-taking at the Heilbronn site is correspondingly

complex. Stock-takes could only take place during the plant closure at the end of the year and lasted to 5-7 working days. This not only resulted in production downtime, it also required high employee loyalty in the logistics department and required some additional capacity as support from other areas. Various systems and media were used for the stock-take: a software program without a SAP interface and a registration form with handwritten notes. The number of errors caused by "number blindness" was also comparatively high. Once all the data had been entered in SAP, it was then necessary to undergo a protracted correction process.

The picking process also involved a lot of effort. Orders had to be printed from SAP and processed on a daily basis. The fact that a wide range of hardware and software components were used complicated both the handling and the technical support and service. However, the main problems were the loss of production capacities and turnover, and the inability to raise productivity. "The main time-waster was the ongoing corrections," said Plant Logistics Manager, Christian Wagner. "Missing batch sizes led to incorrect data acquisition; we had numerous picking discrepancies as there was no central system support." ILLIG decided to launch a project to come up with a clearly defined set of requirements based on the shortcomings of the old system.

Requirements for an automated solution and decision to use the MembrainPAS mobile solution

An important requirement for any new system was that it had to be uncomplicated to handle. The software should be as easy as possible to operate, allow stable processes, involve a short learning curve and reduce setup times. It was also necessary to be able to perform processes direct in SAP in order to prevent transmission errors and interface problems.

The search for a suitable project partner was quick and uncomplicated. "We came across Membrain during the LogiMAT 2012," says Christian Wagner. "The many years of project experience and the professional expertise had us convinced. Membrain develops a standard solution, which means our costs and risks remain manageable."

New system test phase and commissioning

Before ILLIG went live with the mobile solution, the Membrain software was tried and tested in a purpose-built test system where all of the functionalities were tested using practical examples. The inventory management test phase was completed quickly, as the processes had been easily mapped in the SAP standard. It was also possible to undertake slightly more complex picking processes after some minor adjustments and optimisation.

Summary of Plant Logistics Manager Christian Wagner

"Today, we are capable of performing the stock-take ourselves, without any external assistance, and at any time if need be. At the current point in time [mid-August 2014 - ed. note] we have already inventoried more than 60% of all inventory-managed materials. Having introduced picking with scanners, we now have greater stability, a higher quality of supply and delivery reliability, and can train employees very quickly.

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