



User Report of the
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Success Story

Bauerfeind AG, Zeulenroda

«We were able to optimize our processes, increase data quality and the degree of automation, and now there is a lot more transparency.»

«Kaba Benzing has proven to be the ideal partner technologically as well as with respect to the participation in developing the solution.»

Eberhard Hahn
IT Manager

www.bauerfeind.de



Integrated Production Data Collection (PDC) solution provides more transparency

Bauerfeind has been producing medical aids for more than 70 years meeting the highest standards of quality, effectiveness, and wearing comfort to enhance patients' quality of life and to allow them to lead a more active life. Bauerfeind's «Medical Line» offers physicians, hospitals, and specialized retailers complete therapy concepts for all body parts. Companies that operate under the Bauerfeind AG name are the most reputable suppliers of medical and wellness products for the areas of phlebology, orthopedy, podiatry, and prosthodontics. The Group manufactures compression stockings, bandages, orthoses, orthopedic insole blanks, prostheses, and shoes. The fitness and wellness products of Zeuba and Berkemann -two business units of the Bauerfeind Group-put the finishing touch on Bauerfeind's range of products. With some 1,800 employees and 18,000 products the Group generated a total revenue of approx. 200M. Euros in 2004. Twelve subsidiaries in Europe and the US as well as a large number of distributors handle the distribution of Bauerfeind products worldwide.

Bauerfeind explains its positive development this way: Quality and innovation. «Quality is and remains the key to success», emphasizes Hans. B. Bauerfeind, chairman of the management board. «Integral part of our mission statement is to continuously improve our products and optimize our processes.» Core business is manufacturing according to customers' specifications. «In this area we need to be extra fast», says Gerhard Jahn, Production Manager at Bauerfeind. «It is our goal to deliver orders, that come in today, the next day already.» 1,500 to 2,000 customized orders must be managed and handled every day. Besides that, standard stockings are mass produced, for example for hospitals.

A highly sophisticated and high-grade PDC/MDC (Machine Data Collection) system for providing up-to-date and precise factual data is imperative to improve data collection and to increase cost transparency. In 2002, after the Management had decided to implement SAP as ERP system across the Group, they started looking for a new PDC system that would replace the old PDC and Time and Attendance devices.

Success Story

«At Bauerfeind, we are presently implementing a sophisticated, integrative, and SAP-based application environment. For this purpose we needed an SAP certified PDC system that would cover our multiple requirements, but does not lead to a second application layer under SAP», explains Eberhard Hahn, IT Manager at Bauerfeind AG. Bauerfeind looked for a vendor that already had extensive experience with SAP and that had a solution which offered the highest possible integration into SAP. Mobile data collection devices were needed for the multiple-machine area. axentiv, an SAP consulting firm, helped with thoroughly comparing several systems. Then, Bauerfeind found out about Kaba Benzing and decided in favor of their solution. «We now have a self-contained, one-stop solution which handles data exchange via SAP's standard interface. With its 950 SAP installations, Kaba Benzing could show off with an impressive number of references», comments Holger Wohlrabe, member of the SAP project team application support and application development PP/QM. The launch of the entire system on January 1, 2005 was preceded by a

thorough project planning stage and test phase. Bauerfeind had various PDC requirements, e.g. calculation of incentive pay, change of job types, multiple machine operation, batch tracing, individual dialogs at the terminals. Kaba Benzing developed a data collection solution especially customized for Bauerfeind. Then, at the end of 2004, the complete hardware for access control, time and production data collection was installed: 4 Bedanet 92 90 Access Managers and 22 subterminals, 5 Bedanet 93 80 time recording terminals, almost 50 Bedanet 95 80 PDC devices with 10.4" and 15" graphic display respectively, as well as 18 mobile terminals. They are connected with the B-COMM server and the SAP system via Ethernet. The entire system went live with a big bang on January 1st. «It went off without a hitch from start to finish», reports Holger Wohlrabe. With the very same LEGIC badge, some 700 employees book their working hours -flextime, and work in 2 or 3 shifts-contactless at the new terminals. Shop floor workers simply clock in and out at the PDC devices. The effects especially in the PDC sector were the biggest.

The online system covers many functionalities: Group work, multiple machine operation, rework, report on produced quantity and scrap, time event and time ticket related recording, incentive pay, and change of job type. Jobs can be reported finished or partly finished including interruption reason, scrap, reason, etc. Individual dialogs were developed for several areas. Bauerfeind records a huge number of PDC data: From January to the end of May approximately 1,330,000 PDC confirmations were executed. The expectations that have been placed on the new and highly complex system were more than fulfilled. «We now have an integrated solution with new and improved information content», explains Holger Wohlrabe. «We see at any time where a job is at the moment», says Gerhard Jahn. «Any type of production error is recorded which allows us to react fast and flexible. Now we are able to reduce errors and malfunctions to a minimum.» Bauerfeind strikes a positive balance.