

# Success Story

## Völkl Sports GmbH, Straubing

«Without IFS Applications, we and our team could no longer satisfy the increasing and mainly short-term requirements to the IT department. With the old COBOL system, it took about three weeks to further develop a certain functionality. Now we can implement similar tasks in one to three days, which permits us to respond to new demands within an acceptable timeframe.»

Gerold Fath  
IT-Manager

www.voelkl.de  
www.ifsworld.com

**Völkl**

**IFS**



### At Top Speed into the Winter Sports Season with IFS Applications™

As a manufacturer of sports articles, Völkl Sports in Straubing depends on IT support in order to control the complex processes in production and sales efficiently. Being a season-dependent field of business, the production of skis is particularly exacting as regards logistics and planning. The IT Department in Straubing, i.e. IT Manager Gerold Fath and the five members of his team, provides support for six locations, including the 200 local PC work places. The staff is responsible for data processing in production and sales logistics and, in addition, for supporting the database of the „sister“ Marker (ski bindings). The various interacting processes set high demands to the team and the technology. In the framework of ski production, as it takes place in the Völkl development and production centre in Straubing, different materials must be combined to get the final product - which is done partly automatically but requires also a considerable amount of manual work.

The production is planned already in spring so that the current range of models gets to the sports shops in time for the winter season - even to shops overseas. The production goes on full speed until autumn. In order to control the complex relations between production planning, materials supply and efficient utilisation of machine capacities Völkl must rely on an effective system that covers all processes in production with one software: planning of production orders, breakdown of parts lists, determination and procurement of the required parts to be purchased, feedback of production steps and project statuses.

### Introduction of a new ERP system

In 1995, the introduction of a global and homogeneous system for a better long-term integration of the individual production and sales locations was considered for the first time. The previous solution had worked reliably, but it was not flexible enough to come up to future requirements. In 1997, Völkl

# Success Story

took the definite decision to introduce a new enterprise solution. At the same time, however, the Straubing plant was to move into a new production building and the data processing technology was to be changed completely. The move to the new building took place in 1998 and the introduction of a new enterprise solution was planned as of 1999. In the year 2000, an assessment of the systems under consideration took place. IFS had already provided the predecessor model for Völkl and could win the competition once again - now with IFS Applications.

## Particular challenge: the logistics part

The goal was to optimise all business processes and to combine them into one cross-linked process-oriented project management. The new system comprised the areas of procurement, production, sales, controlling, financials and human resources. Production planning was to form one cornerstone of the new enterprise solution. The project was split up into three steps staggered in time: financials, human resources and logistics, including sales, purchasing and ERP system. The financials application entered into effective operation in April 2002. One month later, the new application for human resources was started. The conversion of the logistics part required the most efforts. Production control, which had so far been half-automatic, should now be fully automatic in the new system. The central task in this context is performed by the CBS control centre (Constraint Based Scheduling). In co-operation with an IFS specialist, the project team designed the system

according to the guidelines from IFS.

The background of this customer-specific implementation is product planning. Every year about one third of the ski models are completely new developments, which always requires new parts lists, work schedules, forms and tools. A high degree of optimisation is required so that the existing staff can produce varying quantities. At the beginning of the year, the production for the whole year is planned. New production processes must be implemented all of a sudden, which requires a high degree of flexibility. Therefore, the CBS control centre is connected to the PDM system. The data are thus exchanged already during the development of the prototype, which is decisive for placing orders with the suppliers of the materials, who must also prefabricate the raw materials. Live operation in the project fields of logistics, production and distribution started in April 2003. At the same time, a new time recording system was introduced. All Völkl employees have been recording their working hours with terminals from Kaba ever since. In addition, the more than 10 Bedanet 95 60 terminals are used for recording the progress of the production orders.

Major advantages of the system are, among others, the full integration of financials and human resources into the global system and the consistent use of automatic processes via Intersite ordering between the individual production and sales organisations. It offers the possibility to satisfy increased demands without additional recruitment of staff.

## Result: an open system fit for the future

Today, Völkl benefits from the system based on IFS Applications components and an Oracle database in many ways. The dynamic manufacturer of sports articles uses a system which is fit for the future and open for modifications. The integration of the individual IFS Applications components minimizes the input effort and creates a high level of transparency within the enterprise. By integrating all necessary business processes from development to dispatch electronically in IFS Applications, the information flow between production site and sales organisation at Völkl could be optimised. The persons in charge know at any time which shop must get which ski model at which time. The scheduling of reliable delivery dates represents a definite competitive advantage. Another asset of the new system is the detailed and accelerated reporting. IFS Applications permits also up-to-date, fast and reliable evaluations.

