

«The SFDC means that we have much better control options overall. Today, the Sales team can call up at any time information about the status of a particular order. Transparency has been increased overall.»

Winfried Ringwald
Head of Information Technology



www.theben.de

Kaba Partner:



www.tisoware.com

Theben AG, Haigerloch



SFDC supplies important performance indicators:

Transparency in production increased. Many German medium-sized companies see themselves facing huge pressure from the competition today. This makes flexible working hours in the production and a precise overview of the costs incurred all the more important. A system for time & attendance and shop floor data collection creates transparency here and highlights potential for improvement, as the example of Theben AG in Haigerloch shows.

With 450 employees and subsidiaries in Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Switzerland, Theben AG is one of the leading manufacturers of time switching devices and systems. It started in 1921 as a 1-man company in Stuttgart and today has a global presence in more than 53 countries. A high-quality range of products in line with market requirements is the basis for constant growth. 'The expertise of Theben AG is to be

found in the solution of time and light control devices as well as air-conditioning regulation,' explains Gerhard Hellstern, a member of the company's board. Whether it is time switching devices, modules or bus systems, Theben manufactures products for the highest quality requirements. 'We want to be the absolute leader in technology.' In addition to time switches in analog and digital technology with classical switch pins and switching segments, micro-processor controlled digital devices with hour, day, week and year programs, Theben offers a comprehensive program of sensors and actuators for the EIB bus technology. 'Through our control units and sensors, other products, such as e.g. heating systems, become more intelligent,' emphasizes Gerhard Hellstern. In addition, Theben is known for its staggered light and dimming switches as well as clock thermostats for energy-saving heating regulation; as well as for system-oriented projects for OEM customers.

Success Story

Since it was established by Paul Schwenk who had a penchant for Egypt and therefore selected Theben (German for Thebes) as the company's name, the company has undergone constant growth and many changes. Mechanical staggered light time switches were the first products in the 1920s; the period of great growth began in the 1960s with mechanical time switches and clock thermostats for heating regulation. Then a technological change set in: the metal used up to then was gradually replaced by plastic. 'Here we had to invest a great deal in our tool manufacture,' confirms Board member Gerhard Hellstern. This area was subsequently hived off and today, as the company Pezet, with approx. 110 employees, supplies injection molds and corresponding plastic parts. A great challenge was then presented by the change that started in the 80s and 90s from mechanics to electronics. 'We collaborate with specialists, assemble approx. 1.6 million printed circuit boards every year with our SMD machines in our own facilities and now 50-60 per cent of the products we supply to our customers are electronic ones,' says Gerhard Hellstern, describing the development. In addition to major electrical and heating dealers, customers now also include an increasing number of industrial companies such as the heating boiler manufacturer Viessmann or Bosch-Buderus-Thermotechnik. No mass goods are produced at Theben in Haigerloch. The annual production of approx. 7,000 time switches still requires a lot of manual work. That is why many women are employed in the assembly department.

'We have had flexible working times for ten years,' explains Winfried Ringwald, the head of the IT department. The employees in the administration and also in the production department have flextime. Via time-sharing models, the employees share different jobs. However, there are also fixed shifts around the clock, e.g. at the SMD machines. Due to the many working time models, the mechanical clocking-in machines were replaced by electronic terminals from Kaba years ago. The recorded times are processed further by the program *tisoware.ZEIT* from the Reutlingen-based software house *tisoware* and handed over to the program for payroll accounting. In the course of the reorganization of the time & attendance recording, access control was also introduced at the same time. The two plants are thus protected externally from unauthorized entry. For calculation purposes, prompt bookings from the production were required and thus the shop floor data collection was introduced in a second step in collaboration with the software partner *tisoware*. For this, SFDC devices from Kaba Benzing were installed at various places in the production departments at Theben and Pezet. The classical SFDC functions such as order start, interruption, restart, order end, quantities, scrap, set-up times, disruptions, etc. are booked. 'We record the working times on the project,' explains Winfried Ringwald. 'The SFDC provides us with important performance indicators that help us to determine performance factors.'



For approx. 40-50 per cent of the employees are paid according to a piece rate. 'We carry out piece rate accounting for approx. 80 employees in the final assembly,' adds production manager Helmut Wapnitz.

'We also carry out diverse analyses via the SFDC software from *tisoware*, such as e.g. vacation accounts, time lists and analyses of malfunction reasons.' The collected shop floor data are today forwarded to the ERP system *proALPHA*, whereas in the past they were forwarded to the PPS system *ifax*.

Theben is highly satisfied with the overall system. 'The hardware also runs smoothly although the devices are now that much older,' emphasizes the head of IT, Winfried Ringwald. The good, long-standing cooperation with *tisoware* is also particularly praised. The SFDC system is used very intensively by Theben, right down to its detailed features, for the company wants to generate as much benefit as possible from the shop floor data collection. 'The SFDC is the basis for our calculation. We thus see the costs for each individual order. We also notice where processes can still be improved, where perhaps the logistics are not quite correct.'