

Frozen food distributor Ardo automates new cold stores

Solution reduces errors by 90 percent,
leading to significant cost savings and
customer satisfaction

Background

Ardo, a family-owned producer, packager and distributor of frozen vegetables, fruit, pasta and rice based in Ardoonie, Belgium, merged with Dujardin Foods Group in 2014. The new group will operate using the Ardo name. The specialized manufacturer will sell a broad range of fresh, frozen vegetables and fruit, as well as frozen herbs and ingredients. Ardo will operate 20 production, packing and distribution units in eight European countries, and will employ more than 3,800 people. The company will grow, freeze and sell in excess of 805,000 tons of food worldwide, with an estimated consolidated turnover of €815 million.

Ardo, known for high quality products, has been using Iptor's WMS solution to run its warehouses at the Ardoonie headquarters since 2008. Their positive experience with the solution over the years made Iptor a lead candidate to automate the upcoming cold stores in Geer (B) and Zundert (NL). Iptor along with three other vendors Savoye, Locus

and RedPrairie (now JDA), was invited to bid on the project.

The primary objective of the automation project would be to integrate the solution with Ardo's cold store refrigeration system, streamline business processes to facilitate accurate, on-time order fulfillment, and reduce ongoing manual labor and cost. Iptor was selected based on its proven track record, acceptable functional fit and reasonable price. A project kick-off date was set for October 2013, with completion scheduled in time for the Belgium cold store opening in the summer of 2014.

The Challenge

Ardo had developed a comprehensive master logistical plan before going into the cold store expansion project. In the past, logistical flows were not fully automated. Material flows between product, semi-finished inventory and packaging stages were often long and complex, involving error-prone manual labor throughout. Frozen pallets too often left the refrigeration system to the wrong location, with shipped goods

Case Study



About Ardo

Ardo supplies growing markets around the world with high quality frozen vegetables, fruit, pasta, herbs and rice. Ardo, a family-owned company, was founded in the 1950s, growing and trading vegetables at the family farm near Ardoonie, Belgium. Ardo's first vegetable freezing factory was built in 1977. Today, the company has 20 production and packing units in 8 European countries. Each year the group grows, freezes and sells more than 800,000 tons of fruit, vegetables, pasta and rice to more than 50 countries. Ardo's goal is maximum customer satisfaction; the company sells directly to the customer through sales offices run by Ardo commercial employees.

arriving damaged.

Iptor's solution would have to address these challenges, in addition to holding up under high volume traffic. The existing distribution center in Ardoois was processing about 150 truckloads per day a rate of about 10 truckloads per hour. Tight schedules would need to be maintained throughout, especially during peak seasons, when service levels were at their most tenuous.

What's more, the newly automated system would need to cohabitate with the aging distribution center, integrating with a host of existing systems and to the acceptance of a workforce not familiar with automated WMS processes.

In Response

The Iptor implementation team worked closely with Ardo management to ensure a strict timeline was maintained through regular, ongoing communication and accurate level-setting. Iptor's solution would be integrated with Ardo's ERP system, aka "IDAS," as well as the Savoye warehouse control system, Datapolis SCADA system, Transwide transportation planning and communication software, and Easyform document management system to ensure a cohesive, efficient operation.

As the project unfolded, specialized functional requirements were exposed, including specific

schedulers for box picking and label requirements, among others. The Iptor team customized solutions to accommodate these special cases and support seamless, end-to-end performance.

In addition, Iptor consultants provided change management services to Ardo to ensure users not familiar with WMS automation could reach maximum productivity on the system in a minimum amount of time.

The Outcome

By summer of 2014, Iptor's solution was up and running in Belgium. The newly installed WMS effectively verifies that the correct pallets are distributed to the correct trucks by optically verifying the labels on the pallets. The solution has reduced the number of distribution errors by eliminating much of the manual labor, where each worker had a unique way of doing things using Excel spreadsheets. Inconsistencies and errors have been reduced by more than 90 percent.

Peter Schotte, Ardo's lead IT analyst on the project, said "Iptor's solution increased our efficiency, decreased our errors and reduced our rate of damaged goods significantly. They made the entire implementation process easy on us, leading to a marked improvement in overall operational costs and improved customer service levels."



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IT Analyst, Ardo



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About Iptor

Iptor is a leader in supply chain management, planning and logistics software and services. We help distribution companies world-wide solve complex challenges through connected, intuitive and adaptable cloud-based software. We also enable customers to focus on their core business by handling their infrastructure with powerful managed services offerings.

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