



Case Study

Unilever uses Solarsoft Informance to capture accurate downtime & accelerate TPM initiative

Customer Spotlight

- Unilever is a global manufacturer of food, home and personal care products.
- www.unilever.com

Key Challenges

- Utilizing manually collected data to support their Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) initiative
- Collecting accurate data on minor stops
- Compiling usable reports for data analysis

Solution

- Informance EMI – Solarsoft's enterprise manufacturing intelligence system

Key Benefits

- Ability to collect and compare data from all machines and all plants 'one way, same way'
- Clear view of opportunities for manufacturing improvements
- Ability to leverage manufacturing information gathered into a focused improvement process (CapDO - Check, Analyze, Plan, Do)
- Consistent reporting format to help drive training & improvement in the pillars of TPM
- Ability to track OEE consistently

“Using the Solarsoft information into a CapDO (Check, Analyze, Plan, Do) process helps plant personnel to focus on priority issues that deliver bottom line results.”

Terry Herber
Manager, Industrial Engineering
Unilever

“Informance has given us a **clear perspective on where the opportunities are** for improvement and a **way of prioritizing** them.”

Unilever TPM

For more than two years, Unilever has been implementing Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) but found manually collected data was hard to utilize.

Implementing Solarsoft's Informance EMI system enables the manufacturing plants to target and prioritize opportunities for productivity improvement. The Informance solution has been rolled out division-wide in more than 15 plants to date.

Productivity challenges

Unilever relies on OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness) to judge the success of its TPM initiative. According to Tony Lippert, Plant Manager at the Elgin, IL facility where Informance was initially piloted, OEE is by far the best indication of line performance. The corporate standard is to measure OEE at the filler. At the plant-level, Operational Effectiveness (OE) and Cost per Ton are additional key metrics.

Data collection, especially related to minor stops, posed a challenge for the plants to effectively implement TPM. The manual data collection logs were seen as cumbersome.

Terry Herber, Manager of Industrial Engineering, who participates on a team with corporate oversight of the TPM program, says that even when the company's "patchwork of data collection techniques" produced accurate data, the reports were not user friendly to the shop floor.

Solution

Informance EMI allows quick and easy identification of factors causing manufacturing downtime. In addition, the Informance Enterprise Reporting (EP) application allows manufacturers to simultaneously monitor and analyze data from multiple lines and multiple stations in real-time. The system uses a unique software and hardware combination allowing the user to begin pulling real-time data off the line in a matter of hours. Companies utilizing this

information can make comparisons across plants and lines to aid in their Continuous Improvement efforts.

After a site visit by Solarsoft, two Informance Plant Reporting (PR) applications were used to automatically populate the plant's internal database. Impressed, word spread about Informance EMI through the company's Continuous Improvement meetings and a corporate pilot effort began.

Unilever has varying plant sizes, ages, and machine vintages, and Informance EMI accommodates them all to address the corporate tenet of "one way, same way." The target facility was tasked with pushing the limits of the Informance EMI system to evaluate it for other plants. As a result, Unilever decided to install the Informance EMI solution in all of the TPM plant locations.

Implementation

The pilot plant, located in Elgin, IL, produces margarine and implemented a networking, real-time Informance PR



system. The initial implementation of the Informance PR system was an easy process, lasting two-and-a-half hours for three machines. Three soft lines (that fill tubs) were monitored with two units per line, six units total. One unit is used to capture general downtime and measure OEE at the filler. A second unit is placed at the case packer as it has historically been the biggest contributor of downtime.

The plant learned that the vast majority of downtime was instances of five minutes or less. This information provides specific support for TPM including; consistent reporting format organized to help managers drive training and improvement in the pillars of TPM, and ability for plant management to track OEE in a consistent manner.

Impact on the company

The relationship between Unilever and Solarsoft has progressed from product testing to a full-scale implementation across the division. Unilever experienced clearer focus as a result of using the Informance EMI System.

As Herber explains, "No one can blame the system for lack of productivity or challenge the facts now that they have the system up and running in their plant."

For the plant, Lippert says, "Informance has given us a clear perspective on where the opportunities are for improvement and a way of prioritizing them." Lippert and his team make further use of this information by effectively communicating it to all levels of the plant. Because he uses the data on a daily basis, and talks about it frequently, operators can clearly see the role they play in productivity and how the results are demonstrated in the data that Informance collects.

The integration of Informance EMI into existing systems also made the implementation of TPM easier by focusing Unilever's Continuous Improvement effort and allowing for fact-based decision making. According to Herber, "Informance helps us stratify the data." He explains that everyone has his or her part to play in the TPM initiative and Informance is used to empower and enforce accountability in this respect.

In terms of return on investment, Herber explains that they calculate that based on purchase price, installation cost, and on-going maintenance, versus the "ability to extract on-going, value-added reports." He sees the analytical and reporting capability of Informance EMI as key to their investment. "Informance gives short-term bang for the buck with room to grow." Furthermore, he says each percent improvement in OEE will represent millions in savings.

Conclusion

Herber sees Informance EMI as a system for "shop floor individuals to get information they need to empower change." And, by delivering "reports to directly support our TPM initiative," Informance EMI fits the environment and speaks the TPM language. Thus, for Unilever, he considers the system a "simple and easy to deploy a way of approaching the TPM data collection problem. Just bolt it on, turn it on and go."

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