



Customer Profile

Dr. C. SOLDAN automates planning cycle with Infor M3



At a glance

Product: Infor M3

Industry: Food and Beverage, Life Sciences

Country: Germany

“Because of its features the solution was eventually convincing and showed how important a well thought-out and strategically planned implementation really is.”

—Thomas Erhard, Dr. C. SOLDAN

About the company

Dr. C. SOLDAN was founded in 1899 in Nuremberg by the pharmacist Carl Soldan and became known worldwide because of its cough sweet Emeukal. To this day the company is family-owned. Since 1960 production has remained in Adelsdorf, a 18,700 sq. m facility with seven production lines, capable of manufacturing up to 100 tons of sweet specialities and pharmaceutical preparations daily. From the careful choice of raw materials to the completed end product Dr. C. SOLDAN® maintains consistent quality control, in line with the directives of good manufacturing practice(GMP). Today Dr. C. SOLDAN® products are not limited to the pharmaceutical market; they are sold by retail food stores as well as in convenience and mass markets.

The starting point: In search of a suitable ERP solution

Since 1899 Dr C. SOLDAN® has offered an extensive assortment of cough and throat sweets under the brand name Em-eukal®, including Kinder Em-eukal®, as well as genuine Bavarian Blockmalz® or the Original BÄRENGARTEN® by Dr. C. SOLDAN. Now in its fourth generation of sole family ownership, the company still competes successfully in a world of faster-moving products with an ever shorter life-cycle, ever stronger competitors and the consumer demand for an ever broader product selection.

For many years, Dr. C. SOLDAN relied on a home-grown ERP system along with an ERP solution provided by the Franconia Company. As continuous adjustments to the home-produced solution became ever more complex and confusing and because the Franconia ERP solution ceased future development, the company decided in 2005 to implement a consistent ERP solution for all the company's departments.

At first Dr. C. SOLDAN started to implement the Infor® ERP solution under the project management of a partner, KTW. However KTW could only fully complete the implementation in dispatch and distribution. At this point employee acceptance with regard to the solution was very low, so in 2007 the company decided to reevaluate the entire implementation. Several providers of industry solutions for production planning, including SAP, made offers, but once again Infor, now represented by Infor partner Terna won the business.

“Altogether we spent over four intensive months dealing with the individual solutions and their functionalities” says Thomas Erhard of Dr. C. SOLDAN. “We went over all of our processes very thoroughly, above all in production, for which we required a large number of specific functions.”

“Today this hardly causes us any work (production orders/recipes), no more repeated gathering of data and therefore fewer sources of error. And all the employees involved can now have centralised access to it.”

—Thomas Erhard, Dr. C. SOLDAN®

Dr. C. SOLDAN uses an uninterrupted production approach, in which individual operational stages take place in a step-by-step work sequence. For example, each of the company’s sweet ovens can hold up to 8 tons of liquid mass. This liquid mass is shaped into a long strand and divided into separate sweets which then undergo further different production processes, each in different batches. The ERP system must strike a balance between flexibility and the simultaneous complexity of the different functionalities.

“And here it was demonstrated that Infor not only completely met our requirements, but was also far more suitable for SMEs compared with SAP. Furthermore we were already using Infor M3 in dispatch and distribution, so there was also an optimum cost/utility factor,” says Erhard.

In addition, Infor was able to present numerous references in the food industry. In addition, the chemistry between Dr. C. SOLDAN and the Terna advisors was strong right from the start.

The software implementation phase

In June 2007, the company decided to have Infor undertake a completely new implementation of Infor M3 to be ready by July 2008. Since the implementation was problem free and progress had been so much faster than was foreseen in the schedule, Dr. C. SOLDAN decided to go live even earlier with the portions that had already been implemented. So production, purchasing and cost accounting could begin in February which gave the employees the chance to get used to the new system slowly and to get to know it in smaller sections.

“But our organizational talent was put to the test,” Thomas Erhard says. “As we wanted to transfer our currently existing data into Infor M3 and to repair mistakes still present from the restart, some of the required recipes for our sweets were not yet recorded. In order to start production anyway, we had to plan in advance exactly which of our assortment of more than 1,000 recipes we would transfer next.”

Business benefits for Dr. C. SOLDAN

The completed project delivers massive advantages to Dr. C. SOLDAN especially in the area of production planning.

Today, the company has the benefit of a consistent and automatic planning cycle from customer requirements to detailed production planning. As a result, every sales plan is now created from distribution information with the help of a demand planner. The employees hand in their expected figures which the demand planner uses to create a production plan in Infor M3. “This way we now have hardly any manual planning,” says Thomas Erhard. “We can get the result almost blindfolded.”

The company needs to prove that its products satisfy rigorous quality standards because they’re classified as pharmaceutical products, drugs, and medicinal products, and they also fall within the categories of food and animal feeds. Because of those exacting requirements, the powerful batch management and batch tracking capabilities in Infor M3 help the company maintain top quality consistently with far fewer complications.

Dr. C. SOLDAN® is licensed to produce pharmaceutical products and supplies pharmacies, drugstores and specialised traders such as Rewe or Edeka. “Beforehand we used to relate all this with Excel tables and a high outlay in labour,” Erhard says.

In addition, the process computers can be linked to Infor M3 via simple interfaces during the planning process. Beforehand this had to be processed via subsystems in order to record production orders or recipes directly in the system. "Today this hardly causes us any work, no more repeated gathering of data and therefore fewer sources of error and all the employees involved can now have centralised access to it."

In two locations in Nuremburg and in nearby Adelsdorf, up to 100 tons of sweet specialities and pharmaceutical preparations will be manufactured daily with the help of Infor M3.

Sixty employees work with Infor M3 at these two locations "and today they are very happy with the implementation," says Erhard. "Because of its features the solution was eventually convincing and showed how important a well thought-out and strategically planned implementation really is."



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