



Brewhouse gets high on quality

Coopers Brewery replaced its custom-developed quality system with a system that stored quality data for year and also gave staff the ability to analyse the data and make continuous improvements, writes **Jeff Salton**.

COOPERS Brewery – the largest family-owned brewery and the third largest brewery in this country – celebrates its 150th anniversary in this year.

Recently, worldwide demand for Coopers products dictated that the company replace its custom-developed quality system with a modern system that not only would store quality data for years but also give Coopers' personnel the ability to analyse the data and make continuous improvements. Technology partner Siemens provided the solution with its SIMATIC IT Unilab Laboratory Information Management System (R&D Suite).

Coopers Operations Manager Nick Sterenberg and his team evaluated several information management systems on the market and decided to use the Siemens Unilab solution.

The decision to use Unilab was based on the ability of Unilab to integrate with the Manufacturing Execution System (MES) that Coopers was planning to implement, Unilab's ability to integrate with the various laboratory instruments and the relationship between Coopers and Siemens.

Over the past 20 years, SIMATIC IT Unilab has been chosen by a number of companies such as Unilever, ABInBev, Cargill, Schering-Plough Labo, to name a few.

"Unilab is easy to implement and easy to use," said Coopers Laboratory Manager Janie Zimmermann. Siemens provided three weeks of training on Unilab to Coopers' personnel after which Coopers implemented the system on its own with support from Siemens. A year later advanced training was provided by Siemens to analyse the collected data.

"Unilab has been operational for the past two years and has provided a significant amount of information to enable us to model and manage the complete workflow of all quality data in the lab and on the production line and enabled us to provide a B2B integration



DATA: Unilab has been operational for the past two years and has provided a significant amount of information.

with one of our main supplier to provide them with an interface to directly put in quality information using Unilab's web based capabilities," said Zimmermann.

One of the drivers behind an increase in the implementation of MES and MES functionality is the involvement of senior management wanting to link manufac-

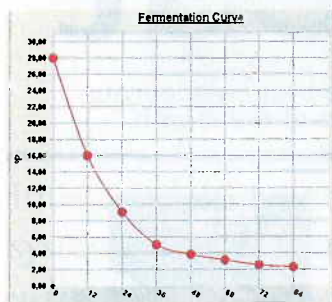
turing processes to corporate strategies. These include the need to converge top floor visions and shop floor system and drive overall value through governance, quality and cost management.

Importantly, sustainable value creation processes require optimum market responsiveness.

Software platforms like Siemens Simatic IT provide multi-plant and full supply chain coordination across the different divisions within the plant, taking care of the plant-centric functional requirements. This is achieved through a modular and scalable approach.

"Simatic IT allows companies to

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TRACKING TRACING: Coopers needed to analyse the data and make continuous improvements.

establish an enterprise technology enabler enforcing value-driven strategies from the business to performance measures on the plant," says Siemens Market Development Manager Food & Beverage, Daraius Battiwalla.

"Plant operators should look for a solution that fills the gap between business systems (typically ERPs) and control systems. The right system should be able to create the conditions for an increase in the efficiency of the overall supply chain.

"For instance, the Simatic IT Production Suite is a collection of highly integrated components with a broad



LABORATORY: The decision to use Unilab was based on the ability to integrate it with various laboratory instruments.

range of functionality designed to coordinate the systems within each factory and standardise production across the entire enterprise for a better performance," he said.

Battiwalla recommends customers should consult companies that can provide the following key benefits in their MES solution:

- Full traceability across the different functional departments
- Full transparency of operations at the enterprise level to help ensure quality and governance. Without the comprehensive view of production MES provides, senior managers risk making poor decisions across the rest of the enterprise
- Guidance for operators that initiate quality instructions enforcing best practice processes
- Data to use for regulatory or customer compliance about the product and its history as well as the process by which it was produced
- Accurate and timely information on the detailed production levers that plant employees/ management need to identify and correct – or possibly prevent – problems.

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