



User Report

Mechanical Engineering, Plant Engineering and Construction



Lägler

WELTWEIT FÜHREND IN DER
FUSSBODENSCHLEIFTECHNIK

Future-Proof ERP

It keeps going and going – always up-to-date

The higher the investment in IT products and services, the greater the wish for investment security. This is especially true when implementing an ERP (enterprise resource planning) system that serves as a control system within the company. Swabian floor-sander manufacturer Laegler implemented the abas ERP solution years ago. Periodic software updates keep abas Business Software up-to-date and in tune with the company's demands.

"An eternal union, such as marriage, doesn't exist, but the connection should certainly remain intact for a while," says Susanne Laegler with a smile, recalling her first contact with ERP providers. She and her brother Karleugen are in charge of Eugen Laegler GmbH in Gueglingen, Germany. The company's history reads like fairytale for a typical Swabian enterprise after World War II. In the 1950's, Eugen Laegler recognized the importance of automation in sanding parquet floors. The machines available back then were simply not up to his standards of quality and usage. What else could the hobby inventor do but develop a durable, high-performance parquet sander? His first attempt was dubbed "Hummel" (bumble bee) because of the sound it made. With Hummel, a Swabian success story, now in its fifth decade, was born.

Today, Laegler is the worldwide leader, and Hummel is used in more than 50 countries. Because quality is still the deciding factor on purchases, Laegler still concentrates on a vrtical range of manufacturing and precision. A meticulous quality control program guarantees problem-free products. The company sparingly uses assembly-line production methods. However, IT was introduced to the company at the end of the 80's. Until then, the company had relied on tried and true office procedures. "Our pride and joy was a semi-automatic, cast-iron accounting machine," recalls Susanne Laegler. Production was already using numerically controlled lathe and milling machines. Passing the torch from one generation to the next ran parallel to the selection and introduction of an ERP and production planning system (MRP/PPC). Eugen Laegler decided to leave the IT selection and implementation to his children who had already started working in the company.

Entering the information age

The Laegler siblings vigorously tackled their difficult task. Together with a consultant, they put a dossier of their demands together and sent them to 30 IT providers requesting an offer. Along with such renowned names as Nixdorf, Honeywell Bull and Phillips, Karlsruhe, Germany based ABAS made the final cut. Against such powerful and established companies, ABAS and its standard software had a difficult task ahead of them. That they were able to succeed can be traced to their well thought out software. Laegler was convinced that ABAS had found its partner thanks to the 'intelligent' software which was especially user-friendly, and the competent ABAS staff. Laegler's testing methods were also unusual. Explaining with a chuckle, Karleugen Laegler says that "Our IT people were less than pleased when we unplugged the system without warning. But we wanted to know how the system would work under normal operating conditions and breakdowns."



Betting on the newcomer

Deciding on ABAS was simply a gut feeling. Along with successful tests, the human side of the equation was also very impressive. Nowadays, software from one-time IT giants has disappeared from the shelves, while the then IT 'David' is now one of the leading providers for ERP systems for mid-sized companies. Entering into the information age involved the implementation of a word processor and the introduction of abas Financial Accounting, as well as purchasing modules. All modules of the ERP system are in operation today. Recently Laegler implemented the production data capture (BDE) and timekeeping (AZE) modules. Cost accounting and fixed asset accounting are on the agenda for early 2002.



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Help at the touch of a button

Even the most unusual demands are easily taken care of with help from ABAS. Among those are the conversion of the operating concept from sales via a middle-man to direct sales in early 2001. Technical prerequisites, necessary to connect field workers to the ERP system, were already included in the software. Employees can access current data via an encrypted Internet connection using their lap tops while visiting customers. As a result, they always have the same information as office employees. A customer information system provides additional customer details, supplemented with turnover data sorted according to the various product groups. This simplifies sales and increases customer service. Current information allows the company to make offers, arrange delivery dates, and establish general terms and conditions.

A glowing balance sheet

abas ERP software has developed from "abas EKS" to abas Business Software step-by-step, and the Swabian company has been a part of that process for the last 12 years. During this time, the company has seen continuous growth, and, thanks to abas ERP, costs have developed very positively. A shining example is the number of administrative employees. The number has remained constant throughout the 12 years, even though company revenue has tripled. "As a result of the flexibility and adaptability of the ABAS system, we were able to implement almost every idea that led to increases in operating efficiency in production and administration," says Susanne Laegler. Because they were so pleased with the quality and benefits of the system, Laegler invested in system enhancements, updates, technical service and consulting, guaranteeing that the software is permanently up-to-date. ABAS technicians, who operate the hardware, along with specialists for business management and organization are always available to the clients.

"New requirements are generally implemented without going over our budget. ABAS is our one-

stop partner for our essential IT components: software, firewall and IT services. Neither we nor ABAS think in small terms.



When implementing new ideas, the benefit to the entire company is at the forefront. There is also no discussion about responsibility for service, that belongs to ABAS alone," says Susanne Laegler.

"We introduced abas ERP software 12 years ago, since then it has been constantly updated and enhanced. During this time, other enterprises had to introduce completely new software on more than one occasion, either because their provider disappeared from the market, or because the software no longer met their requirements. We were able to use this time sensibly and concentrate on the essentials. For us that means optimizing our operating processes with abas ERP software. There are always new ideas here. We recently converted from network sales to direct sales. The requirements were always taken care of with standard software enabling us to continue using the newest updates. As a result we are always technologically up-to-date. ABAS boasts about benefits for the user by continually updating their products, and the ability to adjust the software to individual needs. We can only confirm this." There are already additional plans for the future: implementing abas eB, the ABAS e-business solution, which will simplify business processes with our suppliers and customers, is on the agenda.

"We are extremely happy to have chosen ABAS back then. abas Business Software has grown with our company and has become more valuable to us over the years. Therefore, we will continue to use an ERP software that is always up to the latest technological level," emphasizes Susanne Laegler.