



Ideal batch sizes despite multiple alternatives

Manufacturers of non-standard products require ERP software that is extremely flexible and offers the company a great degree of individuality and independence. Facing the challenge of growing demand, Aquatec turned to ABAS Software AG to help streamline its operations. Aquatec immediately experienced a noticeable reduction in the time required for order processing. Intelligent batch sizes for the numerous non-standard products could be easily calculated for manufacture. The user interface was individually tailored and proprietary programs could be easily bundled using abas tools.

Founded by Peter Schmidt in 1981, and headquartered in Isny, Germany, Aquatec GmbH & Co. KG produces and distributes bath lifts worldwide. The company was integrated into the Domus Homecare Group after being acquired by an investor in 1998. Also included in the acquisition was distribution of DOLOMITE products in Germany. Working together with the same high standards enabled Aquatec and DOLOMITE to expand their distribution program. Today it encompasses roller doors, bath lifts, and toilet and shower systems, which are sold throughout the world at specialty retailers and shopping centers. These activities are supported by the commitment to deliver a well thought-out product that is geared toward individual demands and needs. More than 110 employees are responsible for market-oriented development, production and distribution. A multitude of innovations attest to the expertise that both companies possess: for example, a patented breaking system for roller doors or a self-adjusting foot cap system for irregularities up to 10mm.

Quality production leads the way

An outstanding production concept maintains high standards of quality – from purchasing to manufacturing to delivering sound products to customer. As a result, technical and organizational aspects of production are geared towards preventing and discovering mistakes. Therefore, it goes without saying that everything is done to maintain the goal of an outstanding solution – from design to production. Aquatec stands behind its products. Even after delivery, customers have full access to all of Aquatecs knowledge.

"A product is never good as long as it can be improved. And only once it has been improved can it carry the names Aquatec and DOLOMITE" – slogan from the company brochure.



Flexible down to the last detail

The growing desire for an integrated IT solution accompanied the organization's rapid growth. Lapses in the flow of information began to impede on the company's efficiency. Therefore, in 1992, the company searched for a new IT system; one that could link all areas of the company. Based on an 80 page list of demands, the decision came down to three ERP providers, with abas Business Software proving to be the cream of the crop. Reinhard Haibel, head of IT, explaining his decision: "Along with the fully integrated modular construction of the entire system, the standard software from ABAS easily adapted to our organizational features and the specific requirements of each work station. And, finally, the price was right. Simply put, they offered us the best package."

Fast reaction times

Beginning in 1993, the company gradually began using abas Business Software in sales and financial accounting. Using the database loader module, a tool within the macro generator, master data from three clients could be easily imported into the new system. The macro generator also proved its worth in day-to-day operations. Individual evaluations can be easily carried out.



Sales, for example, had many special wishes – statistics about a certain product, evaluation of a sales area, a statement on contribution margins, and many, many more. Purchasing and cost accounting also followed in 1993. In 1994, the company went online with production, material management, and the capture of company data for timekeeping. Because most components are manufactured by suppliers, the assembly has a high level of quality assurance. 90% of all lifts are part of a production series. Individual orders account for the remainder.

that they developed, Aquatec knows exactly how much an order actually cost at the time it leaves the factory. Support from ABAS specialists was not limited to software technology, but also included the organization's know-how, which proved to be very useful during the implementation phase. Today, Aquatec uses abas Business Software in all areas of operation. The IT department with Reinhard Haibel and his team, concentrate on refining the applications, and user support within the company.



With the exception of the single unit production lifts, the entire program is modularly constructed. This allows pre-fabricated parts to be removed from stock supplies, assembled and then quickly delivered. Aquatec works with target figures which are compared to transaction figures each quarter, and then adjusted accordingly. abas Business Software calculates

the time needed for procurement and production while taking into account the inventory reserve, fluctuations in demand and delivery times of the components. Only then is a work order issued. Because of the numerous variations, proper batch sizes for prefabrication also had to be taken into consideration. Along with MS Office evaluations, which are linked to abas Business Software, Aquatec also can call upon its experience in process planning. This is responsible for micro-controlling and distributing work orders to the individual work stations. Its sales department also has a keen sense of market developments – feedback from surveys serve as market sensors which are then added to an additional database and then forwarded to the various traders. Variants are already defined in the CAD and transferred along with the parts list positions to the abas Business Software. The parts-lists task schedules and manufacturing processes are printed here. The timekeeping system allows Aquatec to determine actual order figures and exact employee attendance. Actual times are simply recorded from the work times of the operations, linked to the order, automatically adjusted for breaks and similar absences, and compared with hourly wages. They are then sent back to the abas ERP system. Because employee absence and attendance are also recorded, Aquatec knows how productive operating times are – and how best to allocate orders. Since implementing abas Business Software, and using a final costing program

Product lifecycle easy to track

The entire history of a product – from ordering to removal from service – can be easily reproduced using the serial number management system. This is maintained in a database and serves as proof of quality assurance and guarantee purposes. Serial numbers are assigned when orders are recorded. Serial numbers of finished products are scanned from the packing slip, entered into abas ERP and then processed. Sales data, such as customer and mailing address, packing slip number and invoice amount are stored for each record. This guarantees that service personnel always have the most current information available.

Technical support

Technical support at Aquatec was connected to the abas Information system. This is where all customer complaints and repairs are recorded. Defects on all Aquatec products are carefully documented (abas ERP additional database). These records are then identified by customer service via the information system and processed; meaning an offer or order is automatically generated. Customer service issues the clearance for this device. Technical support at Aquatec GmbH & Co. KG receives repair orders via the information system. Upon completion of the repairs, the time used is recorded for final costing. Documentation is also added to the serial number database. Final clearance comes from shipping.

Kanban with abas ERP

Significant improvements were achieved after integrating the Kanban method into abas ERP. Without any extra effort, the ERP system automatically places an order, including latest possible delivery date on the plan chart every time Kanban is employed. Kanban charts are created when goods are received, always keeping data up to date. Thanks to abas Business Software, complicated management of chart returns is a thing of the past.