

SUCCESS STORY

PARTNERSHIP WITH AN IT SERVICE PROVIDER PAYS

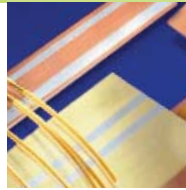
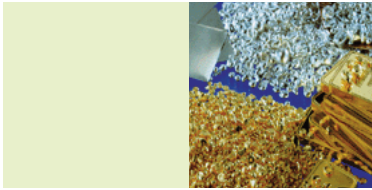
The modern economy continually places new demands on company workflows and infrastructure. Transparent business processes, efficient production planning, and a flexible sales organization are important in this regard. Choosing the right IT service provider to map out these tasks in an efficient IT infrastructure is of strategic significance: With the help of integrated IT solutions and the associated process knowledge, companies can adjust their business processes to these demands flexibly and according to individual customers' needs, and can optimize them consistently.

For decades, AMI DODUCO has developed and produced innovative contact materials for the full range of electromagnetic switchgear, from the electrical low load range up to high-voltage switchgear. The medium-sized technology specialist has one of the largest ranges of products and continues to expand it in cooperation with its customers. International customers are provided with both tailor-made contact parts and semi-finished products, such as wires, profiles, and contact tapes, for example. These are the core of switchgear and determine their efficiency and lifetime.

Close partnership with customers is a key part of the global company's philosophy. This begins with sound technical consulting at the product development stage. After all, the company is recognized as a world expert for contact materials and their processing. This covers the application of all necessary key technologies, such as plating, welding, soldering, precision stamping, coating and the entire range of refining technologies, through to the recovery of precious metals – all of which is done in-house. The necessary stamping and coating tools are also developed and manufactured by the company. This combination of technologies under one roof allows the optimization of products and processes along the entire value chain. For this purpose, AMI DODUCO decided to introduce a Manufacturing Execution System (MES) at the execution level and integrate it in the leading SAP system.

Optimized Production Processes...

The aim was to link the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system in use to the production systems. The company is using SAP R/3, Release 4.7, as its ERP system. The system maps, for the 450 or so end users, financial accounting, controlling, and the entire logistics chain – this covers the Materials Management, Sales, and Production Planning applications. With the Adicom® Software Suite MES solution, a system was added to the IT infrastructure that integrates the production-relevant processes from the MES world with the business processes from the ERP world. Therefore, all production reports at the manufacturing level can be entered using shop floor data collection. The prepared data then flows into the planning and cost accounting modules of the SAP system. At AMI DODUCO, this happens twice a day at set times. *"Complete data communication can thus take place between our two system worlds without losses or unnecessary system disruptions. On this basis, we can optimize our production across all sites and be a reliable and punctual supplier to our customers,"* says Dr. Gunther Reinhard, IT and Business Improvement Manager at AMI DODUCO GmbH, on the added value brought by the integrated solution.



... Enable Fast Responses

Data exchange is ensured via what are known as IDoc (Intermediate Document) interfaces. IDoc interfaces are standard SAP interfaces that are used for the integration of business processes across several SAP systems or other external systems – in this case, the Adicom Software Suite. In this way, the company can schedule planned orders in the SAP system, taking into account material availabilities. Production orders are generated from the planned orders and are automatically transferred to the Adicom Software Suite. There, they can be automatically scheduled in consideration of material stocks, input components, presence/absence of required personnel, availability and status of operating resources, and, of course, machine allocation. The production planning system can also manually access preset planning scenarios to determine the best possible planning sequences.

The MES landscape responds in real time to changes in production, processes them, and creates new suggestions for dealing with them. Status and error logs can be edited afterwards in the ERP system. *“Due to our high production depth, we need universal capacity and personnel planning, as well as reliable tracking of each individual production step. We produce items that can take 13 to 16 weeks in production and that involve a great many production steps. With the Adicom solution, we can cover the processes along the entire production chain and control them precisely. After all, we want to keep to our delivery dates and make sure our customers are satisfied,”* adds Reinhard.

On-Time Delivery – Improvement in Standard of Service

System extension through SAP BI not only allows AMI DODUCO to further optimize production processes and create groupwide reporting: The implementation of the Business Intelligence solution also has an effect on the entire delivery chain. In the medium term, the company is now able to reduce its stock. Thanks to SAP BI and the planning and forecast functions, the company has a highly integrated application that enables central control of heterogeneous orders worldwide. For customers from the electrical, electronic, and automotive industries, every item from the comprehensive and differentiated range of pro-

ducts can be delivered on time and in the correct quantity, ensuring a universally high standard of service. For medium-sized enterprises like AMI DODUCO, it is particularly necessary in light of increasing competition to have a process-oriented work approach and to adjust their business processes to constantly changing market requirements. *“For this, we need to know our core processes exactly and be able to improve them continually. The systems that support us here must be entirely tailored to our needs. Oversized services do not help us. It is more a question of being able to manage the complex requirements of our customers with the personnel and financial resources available to us,”* says Reinhard.

About AMI DODUCO GmbH

AMI DODUCO is a worldwide leading manufacturer of electrical contacts with 85 years' experience in the processing of precious metals. The company has allround expertise in contact technology: from contact materials, semi-finished products, and contact parts through to electromechanical componentry. Even the necessary tools are manufactured by AMI DODUCO.

Other key segments are products for electroplating, coating with precious metals, as well as precious metal recovery. With this product range, AMI DODUCO is an important partner for the electrical, electronic, and automotive industries, and supplies over 3,000 customers worldwide.

AMI DODUCO, with its headquarters in Pforzheim, Germany, is part of the international US-based Technitrol Group and employs around 1,800 people at seven sites worldwide. In the 2007 fiscal year, AMI DODUCO generated revenues of around 327 million US dollars.