



ALCISA & PICK GMBH

SMALL FOOD-PRODUCT DISTRIBUTOR GENERATES VALUE WITH SAP® STANDARD SOLUTION

QUICK FACTS

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Erwin Bückers, Managing Director, Alcisa & Pick GmbH

Company

- Name: Alcisa & Pick GmbH
- Location: Bruckmühl, Germany
- Industry: Wholesale distribution – food and beverages
- Products and services: Sales of meat, sausage, and Mediterranean gourmet products
- Revenue: €40 million (2008)
- Employees: 30
- Web site: www.alpi-gmbh.de
- Implementation partner: arvato systems | Technologies GmbH

Challenges and Opportunities

- Replace outdated legacy solution
- Map all business processes in a single integrated solution

Objectives

- Ensure integrated data storage
- Align product specifications and material master information in same database
- Connect scanner technology to SAP® solution without middleware
- Implement picking process without documents
- Extend electronic data interchange

SAP Solutions and Services

Qualified SAP partner solution BEST4MEAT from arvato systems | Technologies GmbH – based on the SAP Business All-in-One solution for the food and beverage industry

Implementation Highlights

- Rapid implementation despite vacation period and unavailability of key users
- Realization of project on time, within budget, and with right quality

Why SAP

- Guaranteed release security for at least 5 years
- Proven industry solution
- Wide choice of implementation partners and specialist solution providers

Benefits

- Full batch traceability
- Precise overview of stock levels and shelf-life dates of all products
- Electronic invoicing
- Simplified communication with customers
- Reduced paper and printing costs
- Capacity freed up in warehousing and administration
- Fewer sources of error
- Optimized stock levels
- Shorter lead times, faster inventory turn
- Easier integration of future requirements

Existing Environment

Outsourced to arvato systems | Technologies GmbH



SAP Customer Success Story

Wholesale Distribution – Food and Beverages



Alcisa & Pick GmbH faced the same dilemma that confronts many small companies whose success outgrows their IT infrastructure. The company's legacy solution could no longer keep up with business processes. A completely new installation was needed because the release of the legacy software was out of date and no longer supported by the manufacturer. In addition, the system had broken down a few times, and Alcisa & Pick's managers were reluctant to continue using it.

Alcisa & Pick imports and markets meat and sausage products from Italy and Hungary. The small business has implemented the qualified SAP® Business All-in-One partner solution BEST4MEAT, which provides many benefits, including complete batch traceability. Alcisa & Pick now controls all of its business processes with the tailored SAP solution.

By importing and distributing products like mortadella from Bologna, Italy, and salami from Szeged, Hungary, Alcisa & Pick brings variety to the tables of German consumers. It has bundled the sales activities of its two parent companies Alcisa and Pick, enabling it to leverage synergies in sales, marketing, and logistics. Headquartered in the Bavarian town of Bruckmühl, Alcisa & Pick supplies German grocery retailers, specialist wholesalers, and large-scale consumers. Besides marketing Italian and Hungarian meat and sausage products, Alcisa & Pick sells specialties from Spain, Alto Adige (Italy), and Switzerland, and Mediterranean gourmet products such as Italian pasta and pasta sauces.

Direct Communication

In September 2008, Alcisa & Pick implemented BEST4MEAT for all of its operations and the tailored enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution now controls all business processes. BEST4MEAT is an industry solution from arvato systems | Technologies GmbH for the meat products industry and is based on the SAP Business All-in-One for Food and Beverage Wholesalers solution. The solution helps Alcisa & Pick ensure that its delicacies always reach the shelves while fresh and in compliance with food laws. Regardless of whether products are transported over the Brenner Pass directly to the retailer or to a warehouse for storage, product quality and customer service have the highest priority at Alcisa & Pick.

That is why Erwin Bückers, managing director of Alcisa & Pick, believes that one of the industry solution's biggest advantages is the seamless communication with trade and logistics partners.

"After deploying the SAP solution, we speak the same language as our partners – we use the same bar-code systems and understand each other when exchanging data electronically. If we use RFID [radio frequency identification] in the future, we can easily integrate it into the solution. Good communication is a very important element of our success," states Bückers.

Secure Future Investment

Opting for an SAP solution was not an easy decision for Alcisa & Pick. With annual revenues of €40 million and just 30 employees, the managers initially had reservations about a solution that

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might be too big and expensive to implement. "However, the size of the company didn't appear to be a factor," recalls Bückers. "The IT requirements were much more important. After all, business works in a small company in much the same way as in a large one. And our success has proven us right – we're very satisfied with our SAP solution."



“Our employees quickly discovered the benefits of the solution and gained confidence on a daily basis – even without external training. The new software was running really well after just two weeks. Now, everyone thinks the implementation was a positive, important experience.”

Erwin Bückers, Managing Director, Alcisa & Pick GmbH

One of the main reasons for choosing the SAP solution was the security that SAP offers through its dependable release strategy. “SAP offers security for the future like no other vendor. If a

with tailored software within a very short space of time – even though the implementation took place during the vacation period and many key users were not available. Moreover, there

times and ensures that Alcisa & Pick is firmly in control of stock levels and the flow of goods.

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This tracking functionality gives the company a sense of security that comes from being able to trace its products at all times. If the company receives a customer complaint, staff can use the shelf-life date and batch number to immediately ascertain which products the customer received and in what quantity. Information about the suppliers and producers of the goods is also available.

customer has a new requirement, we can cater to it with the SAP application much more easily and with less effort than we could with a lesser-known solution. We have a wide choice of implementation partners to choose from and can select the application that suits us best. This greatly reduces operating costs,” says Bückers.

Rapid Implementation

Alcisa & Pick chose arvato systems | Technologies GmbH as its implementation partner. Before implementing BEST4MEAT, the partner’s consultants – working with the project team – first drew up blueprints that included rough outlines of the business processes. The project team then migrated the data, taught the key users how to work with the solution, and started hosting it. “The consultancy demonstrated a high level of industry expertise and understood our business processes right down to the last detail. We ended up

were no disruptions to business,” says Bückers. In just 16 weeks, Alcisa & Pick had switched over to the new solution based on SAP Business All-in-One.

End-to-End Batch Tracing

A key requirement for the new IT solution was the ability to fully document and trace product batches. Every product arrives at Alcisa & Pick with an identifying supplier batch number. The number contains encrypted information such as the product name and shelf-life date. Each number entered in the BEST4MEAT partner solution is automatically assigned an SAP batch number. This includes all of the relevant information in a GS1 128 code: supplier batch number, supplier name, shelf-life date, and quantity. The advantage is that the application receives the data directly from the scanner without the need for additional middleware. This parallel batch management enables the goods to be clearly identified at all

Picking Without Documents

The benefits of SAP standard software also become apparent when it comes to the scanner technology. For its picking process, Alcisa & Pick uses an add-on solution from SAP partner Sirius IT – Systeme und Services GmbH. The add-on solution enables the company to display and confirm data from the SAP solution on a mobile scanner – without using middleware. The scanner guides warehouse workers through the picking process step by step, thus helping avoid errors.

Thanks to the scanner technology, the company controls its entire flow of goods through the warehouse without any documents; handwritten notes and printouts are a thing of the past. Only information in the SAP software is taken into consideration, which requires employees to be very disciplined about data entry. But data that has been entered correctly is then available as valuable information wherever it is required.

“The integrated data storage brings us considerable advantages. The pickers receive the right data at the right time on their scanners, enabling them to avoid mistakes. What’s more, the correct information is available for freight documents immediately,” explains Bückers.

Winning Over Employees and Saving Costs

Alcisa & Pick also saves paper as a result of electronic data interchange (EDI). Previously, the company had to print out and send each invoice on paper. Ever since it went live with the SAP software, however, the firm has communicated with all of its major partners using EDI. In this way, it has reduced the volume of physical documents by 70%, saving paper, printing costs, and archiving space. Moreover, the scanner technology and EDI relieve warehousing and administrative employees of routine tasks. Overall, Bückers expects a three-year return on investment.

Employees had to get used to working with the new IT at first, but Bückers says that the handbooks and “learning by doing” made this process easier. “Our employees quickly discovered the benefits of the solution and gained confidence on a daily basis – even without external training. The new software

was running really well after just two weeks. Now, everyone thinks the implementation was a positive, important experience.”

Maintaining an Overview

The new solution has proved a hit at Alcisa & Pick. Problems that had been going on for years have been eliminated, while the introduction of EDI and picking without documents has resulted in considerable savings. Just a few weeks after the implementation, the company was already benefiting in three key ways: stock-level information that is updated daily, a comprehensive overview of all shelf-life dates, and start-to-finish batch traceability.

It is no wonder that Alcisa & Pick has already made plans for the coming months: it wants to convert the process for receiving orders from the large retailers over to EDI, implement new quality management and controlling functions, and work with logistics partners to make transportation costs more transparent.

“Our initial fears about an SAP implementation proved unfounded,” reflects Bückers. “If you’re a small company, it’s worth considering SAP when looking for a new ERP solution.”



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