

Roland Riedl*, Herzogenaurach, Germany

Smooth migration in the East

German automation know-how was used for modernisation of WBD's Timashevsk plant



Milk reception at the Timashevsk combineate

Since the political changes at the beginning of the 90s, market dynamics have been staggering in East Europe. While tough competition on the old EU member states had companies struggling for market shares, new global players have formed on the other side of the former Iron Curtain. The Russian group Wim-Bill-Dann (WBD) is one example of how a young enterprise evolved into a market leader in its home market. To keep its position against domestic and international competitors, WBD has under-

has become an established brand name well beyond in its home market in only 14 years. The group is processing juice and dairy products in more than 20 plants employing over 18,000 workers. Market share in Russia is over 35 per cent, according to international marketing analysts. Its products are also exported to the EU.

Since 1992, the plant in Timashevsk in the Krasnodar area has been an important part of the WBD group. After WBD had taken over the biggest dairy company of Southern Russia, they focused on modernisation of processing equipment. In 2005, they invested in increasing their milk intake by 250 to 500 tons resulting in daily milk intake of over 800 tons for which WBD also installed sufficient processing capacity. The project featured the installation of a new milk reception line and increased raw milk storage capacities.

But the integration of the new lines and tanks into existing automation proved to be difficult. The existing systems, Alert 5 and Alert 500, could not be expanded and WBD wisely decided against opting for a solution causing significant downtime resulting in massive loss of production. The ProLeiT company of Herzogenaurach, Germany, a specialist for migration of existing automation systems, offered a solution to the problem.

with annual milk intake of 1.5 bn kg, is Europe's biggest single dairy plant and is a leader in efficiency, capacity usage, and quality assurance. As Russia's dairy industry is poised for further growth, the potential to expand the automation solution was also an important factor in the decision.

ProLeiT technicians worked out a two-stage plan for the Timashevsk plant to assure the migration from the old to the new system went as smoothly as possible. The first stage provided for an exchange of the existing Alert automation and operation features without disrupting production. The I/O control cabinets of Alert were to stay during the first stage as no major changes should take place at the start. But the Simatic S7 automation had to be connected to the new field bus Profibus. This was achieved using an innovative solution that made the stage-wise process of switching between the automation systems possible.

A switch in just two hours

The ultimate perfection of the migration process was the result of intense preparation over several months. Beside specialists from ProLeiT Germany, experts and interpreters from the recently established ProLeiT company in Russia took part in the project.

One important part of the strategy was proper training of the workers at the Timashevsk milk combineate. The training not only delivered theory but two weeks before the first stage, operators were also able to work with the new system. All processing departments took part in the training.

Intense tests were made during weekends to make sure there was no major



Original flag for the 15th anniversary of WBD

taken massive investment in modernisation and upgrading of its processing plants. Automation systems are the focus, and WBD chose German automation specialists ProLeiT for migration of old to state of the art automation solutions.

What started in 1992 with a single production line, is today a company known worldwide. Wim-Bill-Dann, whose shares are traded at the New York stock exchange,

Reference and know-how

ProLeiT's experience in the dairy industry was an important fact for WBD in choosing the German company. During a visit to Müller's Sachsenmilch plant in Leppersdorf, a WBD delegation received favourable first impressions from a modern, fully integrated automation system. The Leppersdorf plant,

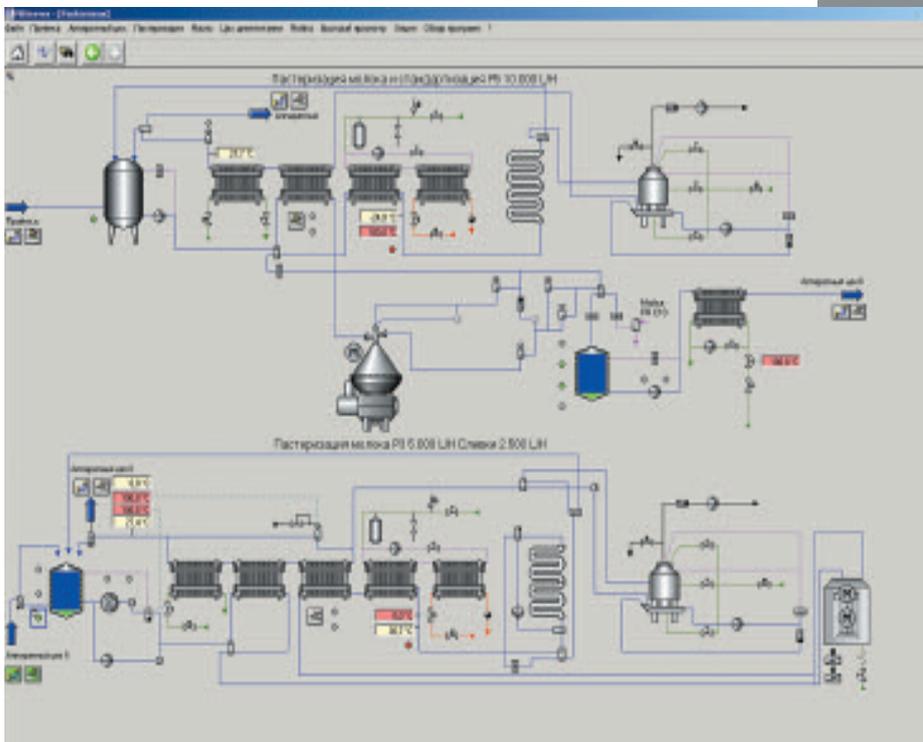
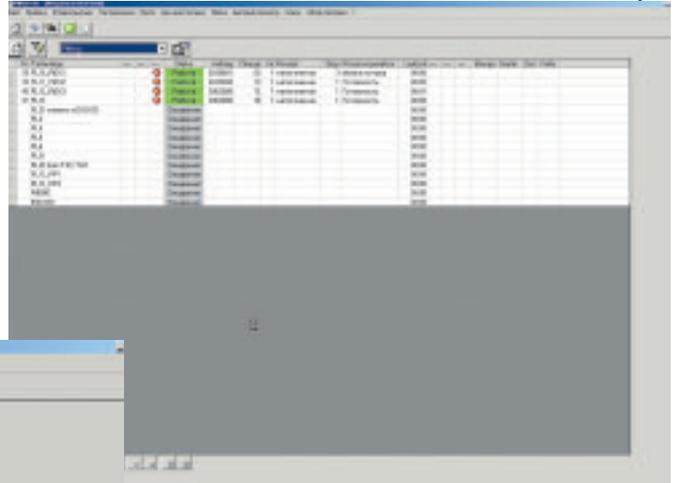
* Contact: Roland Riedl, ProLeiT AG, Einsteinstraße 8, 91074 Herzogenaurach, Germany, Phone: +49 (0)9132 777-0, Fax: -150 E-Mail: info@proleit.de,, Website: www.proleit.de



tages of Plant iT dairy and the ProLeiT automation system family designed for milk processing. In addition to automation, control and visualisation of the processes, the ProLeiT modules for data capture and batch tracing offer advantages to the plant.

The employees at the Timashevsk plant can work with equipment from different suppliers utilizing different automations using a single integrated automation system and a single concept of operation. Reliable control technology allows for new

which can be flexibly integrated into the new automation system. There won't be any hurdles for making high-quality yoghurt, kefir, Rjashenka and butter in the Krasnodar area. 



In Plant iT dairy, the process steps have an "in-tuitive" visualisation

processing downtime. The migration concept was adapted to the plant's needs by having local WBD people on the team. When the Alert system was shut down in August 2005 some six months after the start of the project, it took only two hours to resume production at full capacity using the new Plant iT dairy automation system.

Fully integrated system

The project also has upgraded the communication infrastructure in the plant. All new PLCs and computers are connected via an Ethernet. All client-server PCs were equipped with advanced database and operating systems from Microsoft. Now, every operator's desk enjoys the advan-

opportunities for process optimisation or technical changes. Nobody at WBD questions that this will lead to increased efficiency in the near future after the successful first stage of migration.

Let the future come

During the second project stage launched at the beginning of 2006, the Alert I/O cabinets will be exchanged for modern decentralised Simatic modules. The foundation for this was made during the first project stage when the Profibus DP was installed.

At the completion of the second stage, WBD will be well prepared for future expansion of their processing equipment

NEWS

Marks & Spencer adds Howaru Bifido to all its yoghurt and smoothie range

Marks & Spencer adds "Howaru" Bifido to all its yoghurt and smoothie range. Pre-tested in October 2005, the full range is now available in all Marks & Spencer's outlets.

"This new probiotic range is the outcome of the partnership between two companies that are both setting industry-leading health standards, one in food ingredients, the other in food retailing", says Patrick Veau, Danisco Cultures Global Dairy Director.



"Including Howaru Bifido in all our yoghurt and smoothies is part of our overall effort towards encouraging customers to eat more healthily," says Claire Hughes, nutritionist for Marks & Spencer. The Howaru concept is based on highly documented probiotic strains, such as Howaru Bifido, that has been specifically selected for its recognized immune-modulating properties or Howaru Acidophilus that have long-proven its efficacy on health. The concept also comprises a consumer-friendly brand and logo supported by a global consumer educational and promotional programme. 