

NFM Production enhances management with IFS



NFM Production Sp. z o.o., a manufacturer of protective equipment and clothing for soldiers, implemented an IFS ERP system to streamline its business process management.

NFM Production Sp. z o.o. belongs to the Norwegian NFM Group and specializes in manufacturing personal protective equipment for the army, special forces, and police. Among others, the company produces tactical vests and bulletproof vests with protective composite panels. Other production lines include custom-made military fatigues and equipment, such as bags, belts, backpacks, or holsters. All the products are required to meet very strict quality standards (including fire retardancy, adequate day and night camouflage properties, and ergonomics).

Rapid development increased demands

Since commencing operations in 2001, NFM Production's development has been very dynamic. At first, the company was involved in sewing custom clothing for its Norwegian headquarters. Now, the entire manufacturing process—from the first contact with a client, through product design and development, the selection and purchase of raw materials, manufacturing, delivery and after-sales service—is carried out by the Polish subsidiary. The rapid growth of the company meant that its previous IT management support system was unable to meet its needs. On account of this, the company's board of management decided to migrate to a new ERP system. "We implemented our previous IT system when the company was significantly smaller, and our needs in terms of system support were completely different.

Back then we were manufacturing textiles, and we did not have a complex R&D department. The leap in our development was so big that our existing ERP system was unable to meet all our needs and became quite an obstacle in our further development," says Małgorzata Dombrowska, Managing Director of NFM Production Sp. z o.o. In the middle of 2013, the board of management of NFM Production started to prepare for the implementation of a new ERP system. As a part of a pre-implementation analysis, the processes and areas that were

About NFM Production SP. Z O.O.

NFM Production Sp. z o.o. is part of Norwegian NFM Group, a leading European supplier of individual protective equipment for the army. The company has been operating on the Polish market since 2001, specializing in manufacturing protective equipment for soldiers. A manufacturing plant of NFM Production Sp. z o.o. is located in Potęgowo, near Łębork. Over 90% of its total production is exported, mainly to Norway, but also to Belgium, France and Italy.



Benefits seen using IFS

- Process streamlining
- Data centralization
- Real-time business management data access
- More efficient cost control
- Efficient project management
- Agile manufacturing planning
- Traceability of each production stage
- Effective materials handling
- Agile document flow and processing
- Improved customer orders handling
- Efficient quality management

problematic in terms of information flow were mapped and defined. “We traced all the processes executed from receiving an order to shipping the goods to the client. We realized where we had communication problems and which areas needed improvement, and to what extent. This allowed us to create a map of our processes—the basis for implementing the new ERP system,” Dombrowska explained.

Choosing IFS ERP

The search for a right vendor began in late 2013. “We wanted to choose a solution that would allow for a long-term development of the company. We also wanted our supplier to be present in the Polish market and able to provide service for the solution, as well as customization support, if needed,” said Dombrowska. “In the initial phase of the selection process we analyzed offers from several companies that provided solutions on the Polish market. For the final analysis we chose solutions from three providers: SAP, Microsoft and IFS. Each company was allowed to analyze our company processes on premise in our headquarters. Then, based on the information obtained, all three providers conducted a detailed system presentation and presented their offers. After comparing the offers, we chose IFS ERP, as this solution best fitted our requirements”, Dombrowska added. Implementation work started in February 2014 and lasted 10 months. The ERP system went live in January 2015. The system supports all key areas of the company’s operation: production, material handling, research and development, sales and marketing, as well as finances, HR and payroll. The company uses more than 160 system licenses, some of which are used for reporting from manufacturing and warehouse operations.

Efficient Product Management

The implementation of IFS allowed NFM Production to better manage its product development. Earlier, this was based on paper documentation, and accessing or sharing information was not easy. “Now, we can monitor the whole development cycle of a given product—from its R&D project to production. It is easy to access the source of information and check a product’s line of evolution in time. IFS ERP provides full transparency of our manufacturing process, as well as 100% tracing of a product’s history,” Dombrowska says.

Manufacturing in NFM Production is based on individual orders, and the variety of products, for example parts of clothing—considering the whole range of sizes and colours—is very wide. Using IFS ERP, it is simple to perform and monitor versioning of products. “Due to the nature of our production, it is a significant benefit to be able to fully trace materials flow and quality parameters from registering materials deliveries, through all manufacturing stages, to deliveries to the client.”

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Małgorzata Dombrowska,
Managing Director of NFM
Production Sp. z o.o.

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