

REFERENCES



ERP system helps dovetail international groups

Elopak GmbH

Location: Speyer

Established in: 1957

Number of employees: 230

Business segment:

Manufacturer of packaging systems for liquid foods incl. production of filling equipment and distribution systems

Internet: www.elopak.com

The ERP LX Enterprise Resource Planning system from Infor is the core of packaging specialist Elopak's IT landscape. For international cost accounting, financial accounting and reporting, the company turns to PORTOLAN EVM and Hyperion.

Multilingualism

According to Thorsten Möller, Director of Finance for plants in the Elopak Group, the solution's multilingualism, its high level of integration, and existing functions were all reasons in favor of installing the cost-accounting module of PORTOLAN's EVM product suite for accounting into his company's existing BPCS enterprise resource planning system from SSA. Following Infor's takeover of SSA, the product has been offered under the name ERP LX. „Although BPCS contained simple accounting processes in the form of ERP functionality, it neither offered us an efficient way to depict cost-center calculations and customer contribution accounting nor did it enable segment analysis,“ according to Thorsten Möller of Elopak.

Blueprint concept enables efficient roll-out

Elopak is a global manufacturer of packaging systems for liquid food products like fresh milk and juices. Even before its expansion to seven new international locations, Elopak's cost accounting activities included cost-center calculations, adjusted standard costing, customer contribution accounting, and corporate reporting such as balance sheet and P&L reports. In order to install the systems in Denmark, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United States as efficiently as possible, software providers and users worked together to develop a template that may refer to as a „blueprint“. A major element of this took place at the company's Speyer location, where a pilot standard relevant for all international locations was parameterized, tested and switched to live operation. The entire solution, consisting of ERP LX and the PORTOLAN controlling system, was implemented in Germany within one year upon the basis of a group standard. „The cost-accounting system from PORTOLAN is now operating in selected countries,“ according to Mr. Möller. Software users can choose between the company's official language English or their own national language. Elopak expanded its analysis, planning and reporting capabilities by adding a business intelligence solution from Hyperion aimed at corporate consolidation. One of the solution's main tasks is to feed the EVM contribution calculator PRM the operational data it needs. Both applications play a central role in generating monthly and yearly reports, which since 2004 Elopak has been doing according to regulations set forth by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). Accordingly, the national companies must provide their financial data (generated with PORTOLAN), such as account balance lists and P&L statements, by the eighth day after the final day of the month. The data is transferred in Hyperion and then verified and consolidated in the business intelligence system where it is available to Norwegian and local managers, according to them, about three or five days later. Despite the success of the initial implementation of the overall solution, IT managers recognized a few problems that many international companies must deal with. After awhile, the local databases resulted in a large number of local adaptations. The time

REFERENCES



Technologie

IBM System i
Infor ERP LX
PORTOLAN EVM:
Financial Accounting,
Cost Accounting,
Fixed Asset Accounting

pressure of that installation caused many of the subsidiaries to adopt historical master data instead of group standards. And finally, Elopak did not achieve the level of automation and procedural improvements that it had hoped for in its international group of companies. In response, the company embarked on a new infrastructure project. In the first step, Elopak wanted to elevate its two largest European plants in Germany and the Netherlands and its largest sales headquarter in Switzerland (responsible for 20 countries) to the most current IT platform, an IBM system i, Model 520 with the latest versions of ERP LX and PORTOLAN. The second step would involve consolidating the three countries in one database. „Uniform data standards, simpler processes, and greater data transparency are logical results of these changes,“ according to Project Manager Möller at Elopak.

Do business globally, but compute locally

Switching to the latest version of ERP LX 8.3 made it necessary for Elopak to make some changes in its financial accounting area as well. SSA, their licensor at that time, offered a double solution consisting of BPCS and their own independent financial accounting system. But since the company had already had good experiences with EVM, they decided to perform a more in-depth comparison of the financial accounting systems from SSA and PORTOLAN. „The possibility of using EVM for both cost accounting and financial accounting offered us the prospect of a uniform interface for our entire accounting system,“ explains Möller, then he adds: „SSA, on the other hand, was not able to offer a controlling solution, so it would have been an island in our otherwise integrated system.“ Furthermore, according to him, PORTOLAN's 19 language and 27 country versions offer medium-sized corporations with an international presence as well as subsidiaries of international corporations the flexibility of handling their global transactions with a uniform financial accounting system and uniform cost accounting, while simultaneously fulfilling all of the local tax authorities' requirements. Once again, the IT managers chose their Speyer location to kick off the financial accounting project. After a successful test installation in Speyer, the EVM financial accounting system (FIA), including materials accounting (IPC) and invoice auditing (IAU), were integrated into ERP LX in February 2005. PORTOLAN's experience as a BPCS implementation partner ensured that the integration went smoothly, according to the customer. PORTOLAN has been part of the Würth Group since February 2003. Following successful testing in Speyer, the system was rolled out in January 2006 for two Dutch subsidiaries and, later in the year, at two Elopak locations in Switzerland. „This system is processing tremendous volumes of data,“ stresses Mr. Möller. During the past five years in the Netherlands alone, about 3 million vouchers have run through the contribution accounting system. After the Dutch system went live in 2006, the company began using yet another language version, this time Czech, at its Prague location in January 2007. Further installations of other language and country versions are planned before the end of this year.

PORTOLAN Commerce Solutions GmbH

Renthalstraße 20
D-74360 Ilsfeld
fon: +49 (0) 70 62 / 919-0
fax: +49 (0) 70 62 / 919-110
www.PortolanCS.com
Info@PortolanCS.com