



Improving Production for Rhodes Food Group Fresh Foods Division

Rhodes Food Group is a leading South African food producer. Its Fresh Foods division produces a range of ready meals, pasta, pies and dairy products and supplies some of South Africa's biggest premade meal retailers. With the strict requirements for perishable goods, as well as stringent requirements from these retailers, Rhodes Fresh Foods requires fast and accurate production to ensure consistent and reliable dispatch.

Identifying the Issues

Rhodes Fresh Foods users were required to capture production data manually allowing them little visibility through their production process.

"We knew what we received and we knew what was dispatched but what happened in the middle was less clear. We wanted to fill the black hole that is production," says Cornel Koopman, Production Manager in the Fresh Foods division. "We started with the Fresh Foods Division as it is our biggest and most complex division and if we could solve these issues any other divisions would be manageable."

For this reason, TransLution was approached to assist in automating production and tracking every aspect of the process.

The Solution

Utilising TransLution™ Software, the TransLution implementation team worked with Rhodes Food to design and implement a system that would automate tracking of production data in real time and provide total visibility over the entire production, quality and dispatch process.

After ready-made meals are produced, they are sent to chillers before continuing their journey through quality and dispatch. Here TransLution was implemented to begin tracking the products, recording the output from production to SYSPRO. This allows Rhodes Fresh Foods to accurately track what is in the chillers at any time. Using goods in transit transfers, they are also able to check what comes out of the chillers against what went in. Through this method any losses per batch can be accurately and efficiently quantified.

Because of the volume of products being moved through production and dispatch, posting the data captured by TransLution to SYSPRO in real-time proved impractical. Instead, all of the transactions are logged as they occur then summed and posted to SYSPRO at a predefined interval in order to reduce ERP transaction volume. Additionally, this local logging ensures that if SYSPRO is ever unavailable no data will be lost.

The items are then sent through metal detectors and finally through packing and dispatch.

At dispatch, where speed and accuracy is fundamental, TransLution was set up to show all sales orders due on that day, filtered by region. The user can quickly and easily select which orders to dispatch, update the dispatch quantities if required, and create dispatch notes in SYSPRO.

Every morning when the night shift ends, the night shift report is automatically and accurately generated. When the day shift arrives at 7am, this report is already completed and available to them, allowing them to address any issues immediately.

The Challenges

Initially, users across many levels of the organisation were reluctant about the new system during its rollout. Working with Cornel, TransLution discovered that a lack of understanding in how the system worked and why certain tasks were performed was the cause of the resistance and immediately set about helping users to understand the system better. This knowledge share ensured buy-in from the ground up, and the TransLution team was made available at all times to assist in addressing issues.

“The availability of TransLution implementation team has been a real help in ensuring this process has been smooth for us,” said Cornel.

In the future

This successful implementation has granted Rhodes Fresh Foods significantly improved visibility of their products as they move through the factory and out into dispatch. Consequently, this has allowed more accurate and faster output, meeting the challenging demands of the retailers they supply. Rhodes hopes to further improve production by implementing TransLution™ to automate the receiving process in the future.

“Looking back we have achieved a lot. The system gives you the results you want. Everyone has confidence in the change now and we are ready to move on to the next step and include receiving in the system,” said Cornel.

About

Rhodes Food Group is a well established South African food producer and ranks among the top listed food companies on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Known for its high quality canned foods, beverages and meal solutions across fresh, frozen and long-life formats, Rhodes Food Group is well regarded by international and Southern African customers alike. Operating out of world-class manufacturing facilities and driven by a dynamic team with extensive experience in food processing, the company consistently delivers the highest quality product, with the highest food safety standards.

TransLution Software

TransLution Software, based in Atlanta, Georgia, focusses on assisting clients to automate manufacturing and distribution processes to achieve improved stock accuracy and optimize productivity. We pride ourselves on our understanding of the unique operational and stock movement processes in our customers' businesses, as well as their relationship to financial management and control issues. TransLution Software integrates seamlessly with ERP software, business systems and production equipment, enabling the collection and presentation of shop-floor data in real time, as well as the automation of warehouse and production functions.

TransLution Software is made available worldwide through a global network of specialist implementers and resellers, working together to ensure great results. The knowledge, commitment, and depth of experience of our team enable us to tailor effective solutions to add maximum value. We have over 300 clients and have been helping manufacturing clients automate and digitize their businesses in N. America, Europe, Africa and Australia since 2002.

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