Driving improvement with Mainsaver

Company Profile

Name	Muller-Wiseman Dairies
Location	Various UK-wide
Industry	Milk Production
Founded	1947

Situation

- Significant expansion in numbers of engineering personnel across group

- Requirement for detailed management information to support improvements in engineering maintenance

- Existing CMMS cumbersome to use and difficult to retrieve data from.

Solution

Mainsaver® CMMS to support best practice in maintenance and inventory management

Benefits

- % of planned maintenance tripled

- Adherence to PM schedule now >90%

- Significant reduction in lost production time

- Production and engineering co-operating

- Reduced redundant spares stock

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Scott Carty
Group Maintenance Support Manager,
Muller - Wiseman Dairies

Any visitor approaching the gleaming, spotless, ultra-modern entrance to this manufacturing plant in Droitwich Spa (pictured above) would have little doubt that it belongs to a very successful company. And they'd be right – this milk processing facility (one of seven strategically located around the country) belongs to Muller-Wiseman Dairies, now one of the largest milk producers in the UK.

Founded in East Kilbride in 1947, Wiseman's gradual ascent towards the top of the milk producers' league table is remarkable when taking into account that the company didn't even open its first dairy in England until 1995.

Scott Carty, Group Maintenance Support Manager for Muller - Wiseman, has no doubt that a key contributory factor has been the company's reorganisation of its engineering function, which culminated in the selection of Spidex Software's Mainsaver solution to manage its maintenance activities.

"The nature of the milk industry is that 'output is everything'. It's no great surprise that production far outweighed engineering in our company's pecking order for a long time" he recalls. "Maintenance technicians used to have to report to their site's production manager – there was no designated management team for engineering."

Muller - Wiseman took the view that providing additional investment and resources for engineering could have a beneficial impact on manufacturing efficiency, and so over the last 10 years the group engineering team has grown significantly, with the introduction of new engineering managers and maintenance team leaders at each site. The final piece in the jigsaw was the replacement of the incumbent CMMS (computerised maintenance management system) which was cumbersome to use and near-impossible to get useful data from.

"There is now significantly less time lost to machine breakdown."

Scott Carty, Group Engineering Support Manager

"We looked at about 8 candidates for the replacement CMMS – all the usual suspects," recalls Carty. "Mainsaver was the one which best fitted our functionality requirements whilst also offering us ease of use. We especially liked the Spidex mindset that through use of technology and winning hearts and minds you can drive improvement within a company – this mirrored our own approach to the project."

"We were also taken to see a live installation of Mainsaver in a similar high-volume, fast-moving production environment, and saw the product linked to an OEE measurement system. This demonstrated very clearly that it could successfully operate in our own manufacturing plants."

Mainsaver was rolled out across six Wiseman dairies in under a year and the system has since provided a platform of reliable management data that has supported efficiency improvement in engineering maintenance across the business. Not only that, but plant uptime has been increased commensurately, with production and engineering working more closely together.

The idea that investment in engineering maintenance would pay dividends at Muller - Wiseman has unquestionably been proved correct.

Scott Carty provides some examples; "Before we had Mainsaver, around 80% of our maintenance activity was reactive – responding to breakdowns and continually firefighting. Two years after installation, we are now planning 65% of our maintenance work."

"This has huge benefits – some of our engineers now arrive for work on a Monday with an entire week of planned maintenance tasks already pre-arranged with Production and ready for them to start. Previously they'd have to turn up and ask "what's broken down so far today?"

"We now know where to focus our resources most effectively because we have access to accumulated maintenance costs for each asset and each site - that's a huge step forward – and of course, the principal effect is that there's now significantly less production time lost to machine breakdown."

"We are now planning more than 65% of our maintenance work."

Scott Carty

Group Maintenance Support Manager

Muller - Wiseman Dairies

Another benefit that Carty cites is the increased degree of cohesion and co-operation between production and engineering (a relationship that is sometimes rather uneasy within manufacturing operations.) A significant first step was made with an inspired tweaking of nomenclature.

"We saw a potential obstacle in system acceptance within the business if Mainsaver was seen as a solution that only benefited engineering personnel. This perception was changed by referring to Mainsaver as the 'asset care' system, rather than the 'maintenance management' system."

"'Asset care' within a manufacturing operation is important to everyone, so production personnel began using Mainsaver and gradually seeing it as a benefit. I'm now overhearing production staff discussing information held in Mainsaver because team leaders and machine operators run reports from it to use in their own daily meetings."

Data extracted from Mainsaver provides the basis for additional cross-discipline meetings devoted to specific aspects of the past week's performance – for example the 'Top Loss' meeting (where the causes of the previous week's single biggest output loss are discussed) or the 'Weekly Worst Performing Asset' meeting, in which the rogue machine is identified, the root causes of breakdown are established, analysed and a course of corrective action agreed.

The system has also encouraged greater openness between departments – on some Wiseman sites the maintenance team has created an "Engineering Board" upon which departmental performance in areas like breakdown response times, 'planned' versus 'unplanned' work ratio and adherence to PM schedule are clearly displayed and available to everyone.

"Mainsaver has become truly embedded in the culture of our organisation and has proved to be a massive benefit" declares Scott Carty "and we're not finished by a long way. We're looking to use Mainsaver to benchmark our departmental performance against standard engineering metrics such as Mean Time Between Failure and Mean Time To Repair."

"We've made substantial inroads into improving our Stores situation, and we will be looking to make use of Mainsaver's Mobile and Barcoding modules to ensure our inventory stays free of redundant spare parts."

"We've also linked Mainsaver with our OEE measurement system in one of our dairies, with great success. The line-side operator records stoppage causes and triggers work orders in Mainsaver at the touch of a button, colour-coded according to criticality. This link will be rolled out through our remaining sites in due course."

A very important seal of approval to the company's Mainsaver installation came in the report that followed a recent customer audit. This was carried out by one of Muller - Wiseman's biggest customers – a household-name national supermarket chain, well-known for its exacting standards.

Referring to engineering, the report said: "Several industry-leading initiatives were observed, *including the maintenance management system*."

On that evidence, Muller - Wiseman's engineering function seems to be very successfully ensuring that its external customers are as happy as its internal ones...with a little help from Mainsaver.