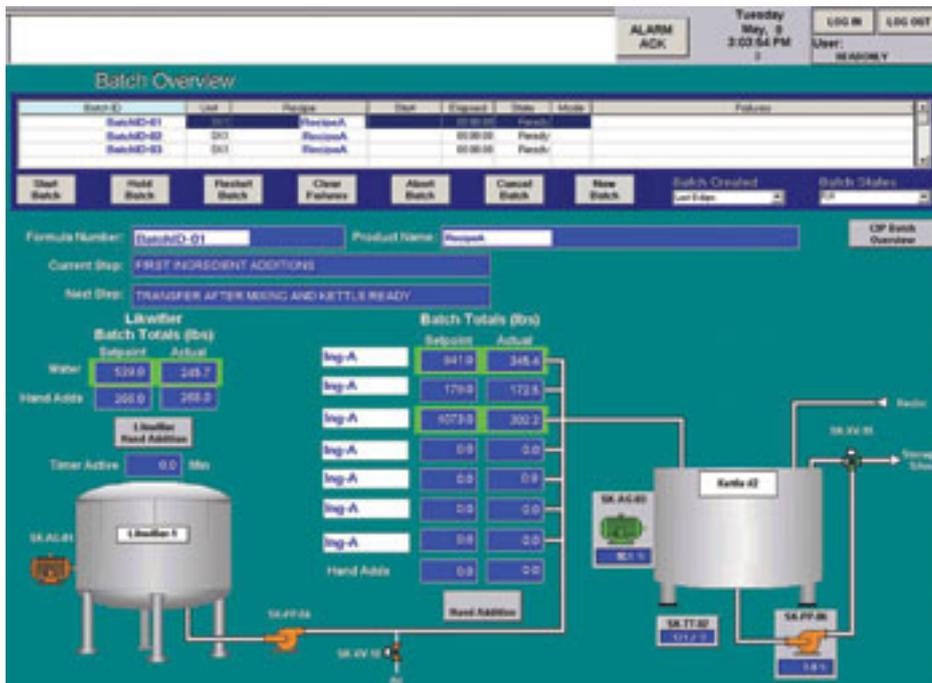


Satisfying An Appetite For Real-Time Data

Written by Special To MT
Friday, 16 November 2012 13:51



Upon acquiring a new manufacturing plant, a multinational food manufacturing company discovered that the operation's custom-made batch software and human-machine interface (HMI) system were on the way to becoming obsolete. Translation: increased maintenance costs, wasted batches and limited production flexibility.

Not only were the plant's legacy systems aging and out of compliance with the new owner's corporate standards, they were no longer supported by the OEM or by company resources. The custom-batch system had no scheduling or historical batch record-keeping capabilities, making it difficult to manage production. Often, managers only became aware of wasted batches when shortages of raw materials for given recipes occurred—*because needed ingredients had already been used*. Moreover, the system's inflexibility prevented the plant from making software-programming changes for routine enhancements.

Bringing in the new

The new owner wanted a new solution—in the form of off-the-shelf batch software and an HMI system to deliver increased control and visibility. This solution needed to generate detailed records of batch and process data, as well as integrated enterprise resource planning (ERP) system data. It also needed to be flexible enough for repeat uses in other corporate operations.

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The company contracted the services of control and information-systems integrator Cybertrol Engineering (Minneapolis, MN), a member of the Rockwell Automation PartnerNetwork™ program. Cybertrol implemented a manufacturing-intelligence solution utilizing the Rockwell Automation FactoryTalk® software suite.

The FactoryTalk suite includes FactoryTalk Batch software, which provides operators with electronic reports and access to real-time data through tighter integration with the plant's ERP system. The enhanced integration allows the company to drive the batch schedule from—*and store all recipes in*—the ERP system. All procedures remain in the FactoryTalk Batch software, allowing for enhanced reliability for recipe execution and flexible product changeover, and less operator actions and probability for operator error.

Cybertrol also implemented:

- FactoryTalk VantagePoint EMI software to provide data analysis to business network users, as well as to plant operators who can use it to gain access to historical production data throughout the facility: This software taps into information from systems across operations that have been automatically identified, gathered and stored by FactoryTalk Historian software. FactoryTalk VantagePoint EMI provides management reports to track and compare batch cycle times, so users can identify and correct maintenance and procedural problems that impact productivity. For example, if a transfer pump begins to wear, operators will see transfer times increase and have the ability to schedule a rebuild with minimal interruptions to production.
- FactoryTalk View Site Edition software to provide production personnel the ability to set up unique parameters, like agitator and transfer pump speeds: Utilizing FactoryTalk Security not only helps protect critical machine settings, it also requires supervisor overrides for certain functions, reducing losses previously caused by incorrect operator actions.

Counting on results*

As Ben Durbin, Cybertrol President, notes, “With plant floor and ERP system integration, plus access to real-time data, our client was able to immediately identify and correct production issues that had been causing lost batches all along.”

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Thanks to Cybertrol and Rockwell Automation, the plant estimates it now saves at least one batch per month. Based on this type of proven success, the corporate business has already rolled out similar manufacturing-intelligence solutions in its other facilities. **MT**

**Specific results may vary for other customers.*

Rockwell Automation Milwaukee, WI

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