

BRITVIC SOFT DRINKS

Dramatically Reduces Bottlenecks in Microbiology Lab by Replacing Paper System with LABVANTAGE

Company Background



Britvic, one of the leading fruit juice and soft drink manufacturers in the United Kingdom and Europe, is a major player in a market consuming nearly ten billion liters of soft drinks annually. Every year, Britvic produces enough cans of soft drinks to stretch three times around the world. Every day, the company sells almost five million liters of soft drinks.

Selling more than 1.1 billion liters of ready-to-drink soft drinks annually in almost 400 different flavors, shapes, and sizes, Britvic supplies more than 250,000 retailers, and has 20 facilities throughout the UK. The main laboratory in Chelmsford, Essex, UK conducts studies of consumer complaints, research, testing and development, troubleshooting, and monitoring of water quality.

Britvic Soft Drinks has a long history that extends back to Victorian England. The British Vitamin Products Company, from which Britvic takes its abbreviated name, was founded in the mid-nineteenth century. The company started as a home business run from a chemist's shop, not unusual for a soft drink producer of the time. Soon the company was producing all kinds of originally concocted soft drinks, including lemonades, mineral waters, tonics, and non-alcoholic ales. Today's business covers a range of leading brands, including Tango, R Whites, and the UK franchises for Pepsi and 7UP, as well as the UK's ninth biggest grocery brand, Robinson's. Supplementing their core brands is a range of other drinks, including Idris, Amé, Aqua Libra, and Purdey's, as well as the Britvic brand.

Key Challenges

Britvic, which processes more than 20,000 samples per year, has been using LABVANTAGE products and services for nearly ten years. As the company's business continues to grow, so do the demands upon its labs, enhancing the need to migrate from LV LIMS to the innate scalability of the LABVANTAGE suite of products.

Solution

Currently, Britvic is running LV LIMS and LABVANTAGE in parallel. The IT department is doing some integration testing, and checking the integrity of the imported database. LABVANTAGE did some face-to-face training, but also set up a standalone, one-on-one system for training, testing, and prototyping.

Key Benefits

Britvic, which is using LABVANTAGE to enhance the service it currently supplies to its production and development areas, expects to:

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- Be able to automatically email confirmation of sample receipt, instead of having to contact customers by phone.
- Achieve faster, more automated booking, especially of large batches of samples, using the grids.
- Accomplish better data tracking. A major benefit will be the ability to easily produce ad hoc reports for customers on request. This is a service Britvic cannot currently provide.
- Replace the microbiology lab's paper system, dramatically reducing the time spent on clerical duties, while supporting UKAS accreditation much more effectively than Britvic's current system of paper logbooks.
- Track samples, and identify bottlenecks in the workload, which Britvic cannot do at present.
- Generate more flexible, effective reports that include pictures, which will be of particular use in microbial identification, and foreign body analysis.
- Grow with the lab more easily than the current system.

Looking to the Future

"Implementing LABVANTAGE in the Chelmsford lab is just the first stage," Walker concluded. "We've still got a long way to go in automating and integrating our other labs, but we're confident that LABVANTAGE is the company that can help us along the way!"

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