

SUCCESS STORY



SAP WM and ORBIS MPS | Saint-Gobain PAM Germany | Pipe Systems



Saint-Gobain PAM introduces a mobile warehouse solution – based on SAP WM and ORBIS MPS

Saint-Gobain PAM, located in Saarbrücken, controls the storage, redistribution and removal of its goods in and from its interim storage facility consistently. The final production receives increased inventory accuracy and faster components supply to assembly lines with dialog-based processes. The warehouse management system from SAP (SAP WM), in combination with ORBIS MPS, as a mobile solution, and Auto ID technology ensures the consistency of the processes in the warehouse.



Saint-Gobain PAM: ORBIS Multi-Process Suite, SAP WM and Auto ID for more efficiency in the warehouse

For the supply of drinking water, the safe transportation of the water in specially coated piping systems is just as important as the purity of the source. More than 100 metropolises and 1,000 large cities as well as countless smaller towns and communities around the globe rely on the durable, stable high-performance pipes made from ductile cast iron from Saint-Gobain PAM. The company, which is part of the French Saint-Gobain group, has 21 production sites worldwide and supplies more than 20,000 kilometers of pipes per annum, which are also used for environmentally-friendly sewage disposal, in more than 145 countries.

Saint-Gobain PAM Germany

Headquarters: Saarbrücken

Products: Piping systems for the transport of water and sewage disposal

Saint-Gobain PAM is part of the Saint-Gobain Group

Saint-Gobain PAM worldwide: active on five continents, dense trade network in 20 countries

Employees: Just under 400 employees in Saarbrücken

Website: www.pamline.de

1,800 water pipes per day

"Our plant produces between 1,500 and 1,800 water and sewage pipes per day," says Gero Pokar, head of production at Saint-Gobain PAM in Saarbrücken. All pipes manufactured here in a two-shift operation, are six meters long and have a standard diameter between 80 and 700 millimeters. The "top-sellers" are manufactured directly for the finished-goods warehouse, from where they are shipped as quickly as possible.

Pipes, which we do not sell as often, are stored temporarily in an outdoor storage area and assembled at a later stage. The pipes are combined to form a layer on two square wooden blocks; several stacked layers form a transport unit. These are first transported to their storage place in the interim warehouse by forklift, and then removed from there for final production. Depending on the type of pipes, a layer can consist of up to ten pipes, and a maximum of five layers may be stacked.

Clear overview of 10,000 pipes

"On average, we keep over 10,000 semi-finished products in the interim warehouse. To deliver the correct pipes to the next production stage at the right time, we need a clear overview of the current inventory and all

goods movements," explains Gero Pokar. For this reason, the Saarbrücken plant implemented the warehouse management system from SAP (SAP WM) and the ORBIS Multi Process Suite (ORBIS MPS), an ABAP-based solution for mobile data capturing from ORBIS AG.

The Auto ID technologies RFID and DataMatrix Code are applied for the error-free identification of the pipes. These could be linked very easily via ORBIS MPS to the SAP warehouse management and therefore smooth data flow is ensured. *"Thanks to the Auto ID and dialog-supported process with mobile data capturing and the paperless flow of information, we were able to add significantly more transparency and efficiency to the interim warehouse,"* explains Gero Pokar.

High inventory accuracy with Auto ID

As the booking processes are now automated, the warehouse staff can track all goods movements in the warehouse with a quick look at the mobile solution, no more time-consuming searches for required pipes and their storage places are necessary. Stock variations are also a thing of the past, and there are also virtually no more differences in warehouse inventories.

"All inventory which is physically in the warehouse is now displayed in the SAP warehouse management and vice versa," says Gero Pokar. Mix-ups are effectively excluded as the pipes are identified by Auto ID instead of visual search. Thanks to the continuous IT support in the interim warehouse, down-stream and up-stream processes can be viewed better, so that errors are noticed early and can be corrected – a pleasant side effect.



Introduction in six months

Despite the complex requirements, Saint-Gobain PAM kept to the implementation time frame of six months and the estimated budget. Storage started already before the Christmas holidays in 2014, in January 2015, the pick process and redistribution followed. *"The intra-logistics*

experts of ORBIS provided us with excellent support both in the initial implementation and process optimization. Thanks to their high personal commitment, even short-notice change requirements could be implemented promptly," Gero Pokar highlights.



SAP being a core component of the French group's business and IT strategy, it was a logical decision to use SAP Warehouse Management. From start stake holders were convinced of ORBIS MPS as it is fully integrated into SAP, easy to use and visualizes information in a process-based and easy way on a modern interface. "The end-users enjoy working with the mobile solution," Gero Pokar reports. The mobile applications were designed and developed in-house by PAM with support of ORBIS consultants.

Error-free identification

The linking and automation of the processes in the interim warehouse presented a special challenge. Here, the use of DataMatrix codes in connection with RFID chips ensures that all the required information is read and processed correctly. In a first step, the warehouse staff perform different scanning processes using the hand-held device. This way they receive all the data required for the processes in the warehouse. The material number relevant to SAP is provided by the MES system of a third-party vendor after the scanning process. With this information, the correct assignment of the cast iron pipes to the transport units in terms of type and quantity can be ensured.

In return, all the information about the processes in the warehouse flow into SAP WM, which automatically determines a storage place in the interim warehouse. The resulting transport order is then displayed on the touch screen terminal of the relevant forklift. An RFID reader is also installed on the forklift. By reading the information on the RFID chip, which is transmitted to

SAP WM and then checked against the active storage order. This ensures that the correct unit is stored at the provided storage place and that the inventory is correct within the context of the removal of goods.

A step towards smart factory

The SAP-based warehouse solution with mobile data capturing in the finished-goods warehouse is scheduled for implementation still this year. The roll-out at further plants is planned for a later date.

"Using SAP warehouse management, ORBIS MPS for mobile data capturing and Auto ID technologies we are making our warehouse processes more transparent and more efficient and achieve an unprecedented stock accuracy," Gero Pokar summarizes. "At the same time we have set the basis for the digital networking of all processes in intra-logistics and production within the meaning of smart factory."



Gero Pokar, head of production at Saint-Gobain PAM in Saarbrücken.



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