



Fast installation

New production system for 45 million liters of ice cream

GB Glace, part of the Unilever Group, makes 45 million liters of ice cream per year. GB Glace is Sweden's single largest ice cream manufacturer. All production takes place in the company's factory in Flen where the production system for monitoring the mixing of ice cream batches was installed in 1994

The computer system that monitors the batch-based mixing process has been in dire need of an update for some time. The old system was based on an ABB platform. It was primarily the ABB Masterbatch recipe handling system that was outdated, both in terms of hardware and software. The situation was bordering on impossible.

"We bought the last available hard disc in 1999 and kept it as a reserve spare just in case," explains Karleric Idegren, Project Manager at GB Glace factory in Flen. "It was early in the spring of 2005 that we decided to replace the monitoring system including batch engine and hardware."

LONG LIST OF REQUIREMENTS

Comprised of more than 4000 I/O connection points, the system was huge. Yet one of the foremost requirements was a quick installation since GB Glace is Unilever's only

"Novotek gave us a modern, flexible system that results in higher productivity, can communicate with our business system and allows complete traceability."

Karleric Idegren, GB Glace-fabrik in Flen



Higher precision and faster lead times gives better operation accuracy and increased productivity

ice cream factory in the Nordic region and operates 24/7. The only window of opportunity was a two-week break during the Christmas 2006 holidays.

The list of requirements included greater flexibility and user friendliness. The old system was complicated to operate and only a few people had the necessary skills. Furthermore, it was essential that the production system could be integrated with a new SAP business system.

GB Glace had other functions on its list of items to improve, including traceability, batch handling in line with the S.88 industry standard, logs and reports for quality and control parameters, as well as significantly better analysis and reporting functions throughout the entire mixing process.

Last but not least was the requirement for easier update and support in the future.



ADVANTAGES OF A SMALLER SUPPLIER

Since GB Glace is a part of the Unilever Group, the company normally works with preferred suppliers. GB Glace came in contact with Novotek during the selection process.

“Novotek was the only company that could present a viable solution to the problem of the enormous amount of I/O modules that had to be replaced within a very tight timeframe. And of course, there was also the difference in price in relation to the other suppliers,” comments Karleric Idegren. “I believe that in choosing a smaller supplier, we received more dedication. The project was large and important to both Novotek and us. And they could provide references from similar assignments they had successfully completed.”

By selecting Novotek who is the distributor and partner with GE Intelligent Platforms they got the flexibility of a “smaller” company basing their solution on world class products.

QUICK INSTALLATION

By working with prefabricated and pre-tested modules to directly replace the existing I/O modules, Novotek’s installation team was spared the time-consuming task of laying new cables. Six minutes was all it took to switch a module! This was a must for completing the assignment over the short Christmas holiday available for the project.

“Tempo and chaos, that’s the only way to describe it. But we got it done, even if we did have a delay of a few days since our facility was not up to the standard we thought it was,” says Idegren. “We had a very open dialogue and were able to make speedy progress.”

WELL FUNCTIONING, FUTURE PROOF SOLUTION

GB Glace now has a system for batch handling based on Proficy from GE that gives considerably more exact dosages than the earlier system. A Proficy iFIX operator interface secures high reliability, scalability and future compatibility. Proficy Plant Applications web-based reporting enables the quality department to make e.g. traceability reports. The connection to the SAP/R3 business system will minimize time-consuming manual data input.

“In addition to considerably higher dosage precision and quicker program cycles, we now have a system that more employees can handle. Just a few people were previously able to operate the old system,” says Karleric Idegren. “Novotek is also training staff at their office in Eskilstuna so they have the necessary skills to deal with our factory in Flen.

“We have a modern, flexible system that results in higher productivity, can communicate with our business system and allows complete traceability. Simply put, we have future proofed our production” says Idegren in closing.

FACTS

COMPANY

Unilever Sweden GB Glace, production unit in Flen.

SOLUTIONS

- Production management Automation solution
- Batch system

PRODUCTS

- GE Fanuc Proficy iFIX HMI/SCADA
- GE Fanuc Proficy Batch Execution
- GE Fanuc Proficy Plant Applications traceability and reports
- GE Fanuc VersaMax I/O modules
- Siemens S7-400 PLC cpus

ADVANTAGES

- Faster system with high precision
- Conforms to S.88 standard
- High reliability and scalability
- Excellent future compatibility
- Integration with SAP/R3
- Reporting
- Traceability
- Quick installation and start-up of operations during stand-still period

For more information on our smart solutions, please visit our website www.novotek.com

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