



e-tailer BAUR increases staff efficiency and cuts support call costs

BAUR, one of Germany's oldest multichannel retailers is using EXTEND7000 to improve its warehouse operations by allowing the monitoring and control of automated processes to be extended to an ordinary mobile device, smartphone or tablet.

BAUR, which is part of the Otto group employing 4,000 people, operates 3 large, fully automated logistics departments at three locations in Germany, responsible for controlling warehouse receiving docks, high-rack storage machinery, conveyor belts and sorting technology. At these sites, BAUR operates a variety of different conveyor systems and 14 stacker cranes (SRMs), controlled by over 60 Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs), which are monitored around the clock from the company's central control room's WinCC visualisation system.

Mobile SCADA brings greater workforce efficiency

Earlier in 2011, BAUR implemented SCHAD's mobile SCADA system, EXTEND7000, which has resulted in employee efficiency increasing by 15 percent and the company's support telephone call costs reduced by 60 percent.

"Business trends are clearly moving towards enterprise mobility, it is unstoppable. In two years everyone will have a smartphone so it is only natural to utilise them to improve business processes," says Roland Säum, BAUR Technical Services Project Manager. "To ensure the most efficient workflows, employees should be able to receive logistics technology notifications and have access to system controls anywhere at any time. EXTEND7000 helps us by avoiding unnecessary walkways, improving the efficiency of staff deployment and saving time - thus increasing productivity."

Complex logistics demands innovative solution

BAUR's automated warehouse is a highly complex environment. In total, there are around 70,000 defined notifications within its logistics technology including conveyor states such as "running", "standstill", "maintenance switch off/on" or run time errors. All notifications are sent to the central visualisation system in the control room, which is staffed by several employees around the clock. On average, these employees forward around 60 cases each hour to the relevant technicians.

"The use of mobile technology simplifies and optimises communications and efficiency of operations," adds Roland Säum. "EXTEND7000 offers an affordable and functionally rich solution for mobile monitoring and control of all our logistics technology."

Before integrating EXTEND7000, control room technicians would individually call maintenance engineers and verbally forward on error messages. However this caused workflow issues because control room personnel were not aware of which of the 35 engineers were in service, or, whether they had already accepted previous tasks. As a consequence, several calls were required in order to locate an engineer able to take over the given task - resulting in an unnecessary loss of time. This situation is exactly what BAUR wanted to prevent when they decided to invest in a mobile SCADA system, EXTEND7000.

BAUR



Benefits

- Improved business processes
- Improved workflow and productivity
- 15% increase to employee efficiency
- 60% decrease in support telephone call costs
- Full SCADA backup in case of WinCC failure

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Roland Säum

**Technical Services
Project Manager**

BAUR



Increasing personnel efficiency

EXTEND7000 was integrated into the existing system control concept and is now directly coupled with the Siemens S7-300/400 control systems through a TCP. To achieve this, it was not necessary to modify the existing control programmes or restart the CPU's.

Now, incoming notifications are simply sent directly from here to the engineer's BlackBerry devices. In this way, technical staff can receive alerts at anytime, regardless of their location.

Reducing support call costs

Before introducing EXTEND7000, each employee carried normal mobile phones with call tariffs. Today, smartphones are being used with more cost effective 'call & surf' tariffs. Since call times have now been reduced by 60 percent, the additional costs incurred by contract conversion were immediately covered. Additionally, control room personnel and field technicians are now able to work more efficiently. Since EXTEND7000 does not source through the existing WinCC visualisation system, it also functions as a SCADA backup in the event of a WinCC failure.

Moving forward with EXTEND7000

As part of phase 1, EXTEND7000 has been used to pass on an initial 28.000 maintenance error notifications. However, BAUR's long-term goal is to communicate a greater level of information and notifications through SCHAD's innovative mobile SCADA software. In the future, EXTEND7000 will be used to inform middle management about plant states, number of units, individual departments' work progress. BAUR also plans to integrate its entire building management systems into EXTEND7000.

How does EXTEND7000 work?

EXTEND7000 is a mobile application which routes information between the central automated / maintenance systems and mobile devices. It applies additional logic to the users, user groups, user rights, message filters, escalation schemes, and team workflows.

Alerts and notifications, which appear in a random way on the visualisations in the control room, can be prioritised in accordance to severity and urgency and be allocated to the right engineers according to the existing workload and their availability all in real time on their BlackBerry device whilst they are on the shop floor.



SCHAD GmbH was founded in 2007 by Christian Schad, with the aim of developing a global standard for the mobile operation, control and maintenance of automated systems using an ordinary mobile device.

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