



Plum: ROB-EX for strategic scheduling and allocation of capacity

Søren Arevad Barnkob, production planner for PLUM A/S: “We needed a tool for detailed scheduling in AX, as well as scheduling tools to manage manpower and materials. Our scheduling was conducted manually, which meant that it was very difficult to make changes in the plans, once they had been released. We operate with three shifts and schedule every operation from mixing to filling. We produce to order and to stock, and control and trace all batches in AX. With ROB-EX Scheduler we have improved the flow from mixing to bottling, and this saves us both time and resources.”

PLUM implemented ROB-EX in the entire organisation

“We started the process of implementing ROB-EX in the entire production in March 2014, and we were fully operational in the autumn of 2014”, Søren Arevad Barnkob recalls. “The objective was to use ROB-EX Scheduler to make scheduling more efficient, so that we could deliver on time and still be flexible and able to make quick changes in production. We wished to reduce the amount of goods on stock and be prepared to handle increased product complexity and volumes in the future. We succeeded, and the results exceeded our wildest expectations – all of this was achieved while we also expanded our product portfolio and the volumes produced”.

Søren Arevad Barnkob continues: “We are already fully operational and are able to expand our use of ROB-EX even further, e.g. by rolling out the use of the material management tool in the rest of production. We are currently only using part of the tools available in ROB-EX. In the future, we will use ROB-EX Scheduler as a tool for scheduling manpower, machines and materials.”

PLUM has used ROB-EX to reduce the volume of goods in stock and improve liquidity

In PLUM A/S, ROB-EX Scheduler is already an important tool in strategic planning and purchasing. ROB-EX provides the company with a full overview of capacity – an overview that is used as a basis for decision-making in many areas of production – from recruitment, expanding of calendars and the need for weekend shifts to deciding whether to use sub-suppliers in periods where production capacity is under pressure.

“We are now much more flexible in production, as we are able to adapt to a given situation at an earlier stage”, Søren Arevad Barnkob states.

Microsoft Dynamics AX is the information pivot linking stock, purchasing, HR and sales. Orders are released in AX and ROB-EX Scheduler is used to schedule orders for production on the individual production lines based on delivery times. Production dates are updated in AX – and this is key to PLUM A/S. The scheduled production dates provide the basis for the company’s purchasing. “The result is that we are able to reduce stock value and improve our liquidity”, says Søren Arevad Barnkob.

With a full overview of production, PLUM saves time

On average, PLUM A/S has 1,000 production orders in the production plan at any given time. The calendar is set at 2 weeks for detailed scheduling and at 4 months for general scheduling. Søren Arevad Barnkob makes daily adjustments to the plan and releases the updated plan with a time frame of one week’s scheduled activities. He is very happy with the being able to carry out scheduling in a Gantt chart instead of having to use the columns in AX. “The Gantt chart provides me with a much better overview, and it is much faster to use. I am able to carry out detailed scheduling on all 1,000 orders in 15 seconds – it is simply brilliant!”



ROB-EX Scheduler
LET'S MAKE PLANS

Søren Arevad Barnkob uses ROB-EX Scheduler to carry out detailed scheduling of capacity, manpower, materials, start/finish times, and he includes comments regarding the specifics to be observed in the execution of a give production order. When the plan is fully updated, he releases it to the operators in production. Communication and distribution of the plan simply consists of pulling an HTML report showing it on a big screen that has been set up with ROB-EX Viewer.

Transfer of data from AX to ROB-EX:

- All production orders from the status “planned” to “started” (approx. 1,000 orders)
- BOMs for each production order
- Comments for each production order
- Employee absence/leave (time off/holidays etc) – registration of presence/absence in AX
- Stock inventory
- Purchasing orders
- Sales orders
- Machines
- Calendars

About the customer

PLUM A/S is a part of CCS Healthcare, which is located in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. The group has subsidiaries in Germany and Hungary and branches in Norway, Sweden and Russia. Total no. of employees: 270 – of which 95 are employed in Assens, Denmark.

PLUM A/S specialises in two fields: *Workplace Hygiene* (soaps, cremes/lotions, hand sanitation and disinfectants) and *Workplace Safety* (plaster, first aid, eye wash etc.) Products are packaged in varying volumes ranging from 30 ml tubes to IBCs of up to 1000 litres.

Core competences: mixing, bottling/filling and putting on stock

PLUM A/S has 12 product storage tanks of 12,000 litres each, and another 6 storage tanks with surgical spirits. The company uses fully automated bottling/filling machines that carry out the entire process, which consists of the filling of bottles (6 bottles at a time), capping/sealing the bottles and then boxing them.