

Hela Thissen

Hela Thissen realizes
substantial efficiency
gains with Aptean



Industry

Food & Beverage

Challenges

- » Lacking an integrated EDI for information exchange
- » Current system unable to handle the growing demand
- » Unable to make adjustments

Benefits

- » Increased productivity and efficiency
- » Insight and transparency across processes
- » Better overview and more control



About Hela Thissen

The red bottle has become an indispensable part of the product range of Dutch supermarkets, cafeterias and wholesalers. The Hela spice ketchup curry is a market leader of its kind.

In addition to the consumer market, Hela Thissen is also active in the business-to-business market. The spices are often used in butcheries, bakeries, institutions, hospitality and catering businesses. The food industry also uses the spices. Hela Thissen went from wholesaler to producer and developer of sauces. The company designed its own test kitchen. Here, potential top products are developed by the product development department. One of the products that has been developed in the kitchen is the dressing line Salad & Sandwich. Currently, the company has 38 employees.


Health, convenience and joy

To the question of where the strength of the company lies, Hay Thissen responds: "In the food sector, three core indicators are health, convenience and joy. Health and convenience are high on the list for most companies. We focus much more on enjoyment; enjoy the product, enjoy the flavor and eat it again." Jean-Pierre Verhasselt adds: "We are also a relatively small organization. Therefore, we can quickly and flexibly go along with developments and changing needs. I think that is also very important. Short lines and innovativeness; trying out new products and new variations to steadily increase our market share."



“If we had not automated our business processes, the growth of our product range and our organization would not have gone so smoothly.”

Jean-Pierre Verhasselt, Administrative Assistant at Hela Thissen




Quality and food safety

Food safety is a given at Hela. All working methods comply with the legal HACCP hygiene regulations. Moreover, the company is BRC and IFS certified. These hygiene quality marks are issued by independent organizations if a company fully complies with their high standards. The quality system contains the entire business process. This already starts with checking the commodities upon receipt, monitoring the quality during production and the microbiological release when delivering an order. The communication with the customer is transparent. Every question, complaint or point of improvement is processed carefully. All efforts result in an annual production of 6 million bottles of Hela curry, and approximately 280,000 kilos of dressing, produced in Venlo.

Flexibility in standard ERP package

As a consequence of the transformation from trading company to producer, the current system was soon unable to handle the growing demand. “Previously, we worked with AFAS, a DOS package that worked just fine. However, as our activities expanded, we realized that the package could no longer meet our demands due to the relatively inflexible environment. It was not possible to make adjustments. This was reason for us to switch to a more flexible Windows package. Then Microsoft Dynamics NAV came into the picture. In 2003, we started a selection process,” says Verhasselt.

“An important requirement for the package was the adjustability. In addition, it was important that the package was able to support the complexity of our business processes in a flexible way without too much customization. This is because we supply and invoice to many different types of businesses. After using GAC for 4 years, we finally switched to Aptean. Aptean has its own food add-on, where many of the matters that we used to have customized were already included in the standard package. Think of quality management, discount structures, EDI according to the foods convention and product specification management. Moreover, they had a pragmatic approach; they advised us about the design based on knowledge and experience from the branch. In 2008, we implemented Aptean Food & Beverage ERP DIN Food.”



“Aptean Food & Beverage ERP *DIN Edition* is a pleasant package to work with: it is **user friendly**, **intuitive** and **logically designed**.”

Suzanne van Kimmenade, Head of Administration at Hela Thissen

Flawless implementation

Hela is satisfied with the collaboration with Aptean: “both implementations were virtually flawless. Both the implementation in 2008 and the upgrade to NAV 2009. Despite the upgrade taking a little longer than expected, we were satisfied with the process.” The switch from supplier GAC to Aptean did bring some challenges. “Converting the data was not easy, because we also got a new NAV version. The entire hospitality add-on of our previous partner GAC was gone, but all that data still had to be copied in the branch solution of Aptean. In the end, this transition went satisfactorily and within the calculated and agreed time period.” says Jean-Pierre. Hela is satisfied with the use of the solution. Suzanne van Kimmenade, Head of Administration at Hela, explains: “Aptean Food & Beverage ERP is a pleasant package to work with: it is user friendly, intuitive and logically designed. Also our automatic management reports are perfectly put together with Jet Reports. The biggest difference with the old system is closing the periods. This is a nightmare in most packages and leads to a lot of stress every month, but I have to say: with Aptean we never have problems.”



A Market in Motion

After the implementation, Aptean started playing an increasingly important role in supporting the business processes of Hela. Many developments such as batch registration, pallet administration and SSCC labeling are all incorporated in Aptean Food & Beverage ERP without any issues. Also, the product specification management is fully under control: with the touch of a button, the customer is provided with the latest specifications aligned with the product range they order.

“Where we had just one product previously, the famous Hela curry, we now have a much broader range and our own production line. If we look at our buyer’s market, we see that the power of retail is increasingly important for our product range. At the end of the day, they determine the price and where on the shelf the products will be placed. We make agreements with each of our buyers on price, discounts, promotion possibilities, etc. Naturally, this has a large influence on how we design our processes and handle cost management, since the margins in retail are often much smaller and buyers set specific requirements with regard to information exchange (EDI). We try to absorb this with quantity and critically reviewing our internal processes to realize optimal cost efficiency. Aptean supports us by providing an insight and transparency and enabling us to carry out our daily activities efficiently.”

Future

Since the commissioning of Apteian Food & Beverage ERP, Hela was able to realize substantial efficiency gains. "If we would not have automated our business processes, the growth of our product range and our organization would not have gone so smoothly. It would have taken our back office much more time to register everything correctly," says Jean-Pierre Verhasselt.

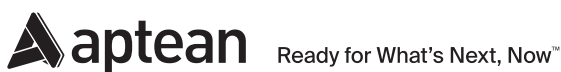
Looking to the future, Verhasselt observes that information provision is becoming more and more important. "Not only internally, but definitely also to our buyers and the end user. A frequently asked question is information provision surrounding product data. The label regulations play an important role in this information provision. We have to put more and more information on our labels. By managing all this information centrally in, Apteian Food & Beverage ERP, and since Apteian is actively following and going along with developments in the food market, we are able to anticipate on future developments with the necessary flexibility. With Apteian, we found a solution that suits the gradual growth and ambitions of our organization."



Are You Ready to Learn More?

Interested to see how Apteian can help you better manage your food company?

Contact us at info@apteian.com or visit www.apteian.com.



Apteian provides very specific industries with very specific ERP, supply chain management, and customer experience solutions. In today's fast-paced, highly competitive economy, organizations don't have time to waste forcing homegrown software, spreadsheets, and one-size-fits-all solutions to do things they were never designed to do. Apteian is on a mission to end those workarounds – with industry-specific solutions instead of generic software, expert support instead of making you go it alone, and a steady influx of new ideas instead of the status quo.

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