The Company

Established in 1990, ICB has grown quickly and now supplies alcoholic drinks to most of the UK’s leading supermarkets, convenience chains and wholesalers. They also export to Germany, Scandinavia, Africa, Hong Kong, Australia and several other sport markets. Between 2007 and 2012, the company went through a significant capital investment programme in its alcoholic drinks production, capability and flexibility of its packaging operations. In 2011, ICB invested in a production business in Herefordshire to assure its fermented liquid supplies into the future.

ICB has become the UK’s leading supplier of Speciality Drinks and offers a range of brands that provide a value alternative to many of the more expensive and better known brands. They have also enjoyed considerable success in several other categories e.g. Pre Mixed Drinks (cocktails and RTD’s), Cider, Perry and Wine.

The ICB Production Facility

ICB’s alcoholic drinks production facility is in Middlesbrough where around ninety staff are employed in various operational roles: production, warehousing, packaging, engineering, procurement, product development, quality control and assurance, technical support, supply chain, finance and admin.

• The alcoholic drinks production facility has three glass bottling lines, one PET bottling line and one bag-in-box line.
• ICB produces c.25 million bottles of alcoholic drinks every year.
• The total storage capacity on site is over half a million litres with vessels ranging in size from 20,000 to 100,000 litres.
• ICB handles a variety of fermented liquids (grape, pear, apple).
• ICB also contract packs for other alcoholic beverage suppliers.
• ICB production facility is British Retail Consortium accredited and holds quality certifications/customer accreditations from many of the UK’s leading supermarket chains, including Lidl and Tesco.

ICB are a signatory to The Portman Group and supporters of the Drink Aware campaign. ICB is very proud of its production facility, its staff and the quality of the products that it produces.

The IFS Story

ICB selected IFS as their chosen ERP vendor in late 2012. The Cedar Bay RF solution was provided as part of the IFS solution to meet ICB’s RF/Data Capture requirements. ICB had short and aggressive timescales to implement the project and their project team was managed by Matt Brown.

As is the norm with an implementation where Cedar Bay are implementing alongside IFS, the initial training and installation of IFS was done by the IFS team. This allowed the initial process design to be documented.
The Cedar Bay team visited the site in a joint meeting with the ICB project team and the IFS logistics consultants. The Cedar Bay project manager, Graham Wiley, and one of the Cedar Bay directors, Roger Teagle, walked through the process with the team to understand the physical environment and understand, at a high level, how the IFS processed were beginning to be developed.

ICB already had a scanning solution within their legacy system and were using Motorola MC9090 scanners, so they had a large amount of bar coded pallets and materials already in stores and a lot of the suppliers were already delivering adequately labelled goods.

The next phase was to demonstrate the Cedar Bay solution to ICB in the context of what they were trying to achieve. At this stage, the project team were already faced with some challenges as to how the IFS project would support some of the ICB business processes.

The key one amongst this was around the way that finished goods (stock) is stored and picked. ICB pick full pallets and mixed pallets, and while FIFO picking logic is suitable for picking full pallet orders, it reduces the flexibility of the mixed pallet picking team who need to be able to choose which lot batch they want to pick.

To overcome this, Cedar Bay proposed using a process where the scanner is used to create a reservation rather than a pick. This enabled the user to scan or enter a customer order number to display all the open order line details. Then go to an easy to reach pallet label, scan the location and enter the quantity. This then created manual reservations incrementally in the background until the order line quantity was satisfied. At this point, any remaining open order lines were then displayed for the user to select and continue scanning pallets. Once all the order lines were processed, the user then confirmed all the pallets had been reserved and the order was ready to be delivered.
Managing Pallets

ICB decided to create a unique lot/batch number for each pallet of materials received via the Cedar Bay PO arrival/label print transaction. The lot/batch number was printed on the pallet label. All users then had to do was to simply scan this same barcode for all subsequent inventory transactions. Cedar Bay was able to derive all the necessary information from this to complete each transaction.

The Cedar Bay move inventory transaction simplified the movement of stock. As ICB have a mixture of palletised and non-palletised inventory, it would have been difficult for a user to determine if a standard move or an execution task was required.

The logic built into this transaction determined if the stock was palletised or not, and perform the required process to automatically create and execute a transport task for palletised parts or simply move the lot/batch quantity if not. Cedar Bay worked with the ICB team on labelling to help create labels for the goods from manufacturing.

There were requirements from ICB for extra handheld devices and Cedar Bay sources and help set these up. The new devices were Motorola MC9100 as the old devices had been superseded.

The Scope of the Project

The broad scope is as follows:
1. PO receipt with EAN label printing
2. PO move to stock incorporating best before date
3. Count per count report
4. Shop order picking
5. Shop order receipt and label print
6. Shop order un-issue incorporating report component scrap
7. Movement of palletised goods (creation of transport task as part of an inventory move)
8. Customer order pick
9. Customer order reserve
10. Part availability change

Implementation

Cedar Bay provided support to ICB during the piloting phase and there were some small changes that were made to the software to incorporate some requirements that ICB had. The complete design with all of the module configurations and set ups were fully documented by the Cedar Bay project manager, this becomes the blueprint for the Cedar Bay system used at ICB.

Once the pilot environment was created, ICB ran their own pilot processes and then provided their staff with end user training on the devices and the software. ICB went live with IFS and Cedar Bay in August 2013 and have implemented the RF solution across the whole facility.
The Results

Only 5 weeks after the implementation, Matt Brown, ICB Project Manager, was so pleased with the work that Cedar Bay had done, he offered to take a Cedar Bay prospect on a reference site visit. During the reference visit, Matt explained the processed that ICB were following in their production and warehousing areas. Matt demonstrated how the Cedar Bay solution was used by the production and warehousing operators, paying particular attention to how the handheld devices were being used in combination with bar coding to simplify various processes.

During the visit, the Cedar Bay prospect was taken to the warehouse where an operator explained that the Cedar Bay solution was extremely easy to operate. Matt also added that the warehouse operators made fewer mistakes now and were more effective in their jobs now they had mobile technology that supported them. In the production area, it was demonstrated how the materials were issued and unissued to the shop orders then finished shop order s were simply reported, received and put away using the Cedar Bay solution.

At the end of the reference visit, Matt explained to the prospect that he was very pleased with the background, experience, advice and support that he received from the consulting and technical teams at Cedar Bay.

Next Steps

The business plan to look at further streamlining of the ICB processes using the Cedar Bay solution. The next steps are to look at how tablets can be used on the shop floor for recording data against IFS manufacturing control plans. This will streamline the reporting of in-process inspection results into IFS.

How can we help you? Contact us!

Tel: +44 (0) 1242 304244
e-mail: info@cedar-bay.com

Address: Cedar Bay Ltd, Hermes House, Andoversford Link, Andoversford Industrial Estate, Andoversford, Glos, GL54 4LB, UK