

Partnership Yields Extraordinary Result

Quality is a major factor in the success of a business in the world's increasingly competitive markets, and this is especially so in the chemical industry. A Company that can guarantee to deliver products on time, in full, to specification, is in the best possible position to thrive on an excellent performance record and reputation. Braunston village in Northamptonshire is at first appearances typical of small community life. But, landscaped into the picturesque countryside, is the manufacturing facility of National Starch & Chemical Ltd. (an ICI company).

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National manufactures high value polymer resins for personal care products, particularly a polymer that is a basic constituent of aerosols for the retail hairspray market. Over the last two years, Peter Jones (Site Engineer) has co-ordinated the phased upgrading of the control and visualisation of reaction processes at Braunston site. National's goal was to refine and revolutionise their process controls, in order to achieve total production quality for their polymers. National imposed stringent performance requirements for the new system, and the specification focused highly on the need for an open systems environment.

Peter anticipated that a closed system (caused by manufacturer operating system, hardware

The new architecture also had to provide a demonstrably global product, and cost effective communications. The nature of the process meant that both DCS and PC/PLC solutions could be applied. After careful assessment of all the available options, a bid from Wellingborough-based System Integrator Stratos Controls Ltd. and SolutionsPT Ltd. to install new architecture was accepted - a partnership that has yielded extraordinary results.

The old style pneumatic manual controls have been replaced with Wonderware InTouch visualisation software (supplied by SolutionsPT), and ethernet-based communications and programmable logic controllers from SiemensTI to efficiently handle the loop control. The choice of Windows NT, Wonderware's InTouch and S88 for loop control has provided National with the open environment that is easy to implement and does not constrain future developments.

The InTouch runs on a UPS supported server with standard PCs as workstations in a control room, that is in itself now being further developed subsequent to the benefits experienced in the operation of the plant with its new control and visualisation solution. The architecture has essentially given National DCS functionality from off-the-shelf products, and it's success has led to the selection of the same architecture for the two remaining reactors on site that handle over 50 other products.

Right first time, every time!

Investment in this project has produced production quality that is "Right first time, every time" according to Peter. National Starch & Chemical has enjoyed a 100% production



principle reactor

or software) might cause serious legacy problems and constrain future developments.

“The relationship between the SI and the end user is all important in delivering an ongoing site improvement programme”

quality record since the implementation of the new technology. National has benefited from the enormous improvement in process control and product quality owing to the elimination of wastage, precise control of ingredient quantity and feed rates. This allows them confidently to assure customers that their deliveries will always be on time, in full and on specification without fail.

SolutionsPT’s knowledge and expertise has proved invaluable to National, and without such specialised understanding, National could not boast such extraordinary quality standards. The key words are “precision” and “control”, giving the exceptional production quality standards that have been achieved by this excellent control and visualisation process.

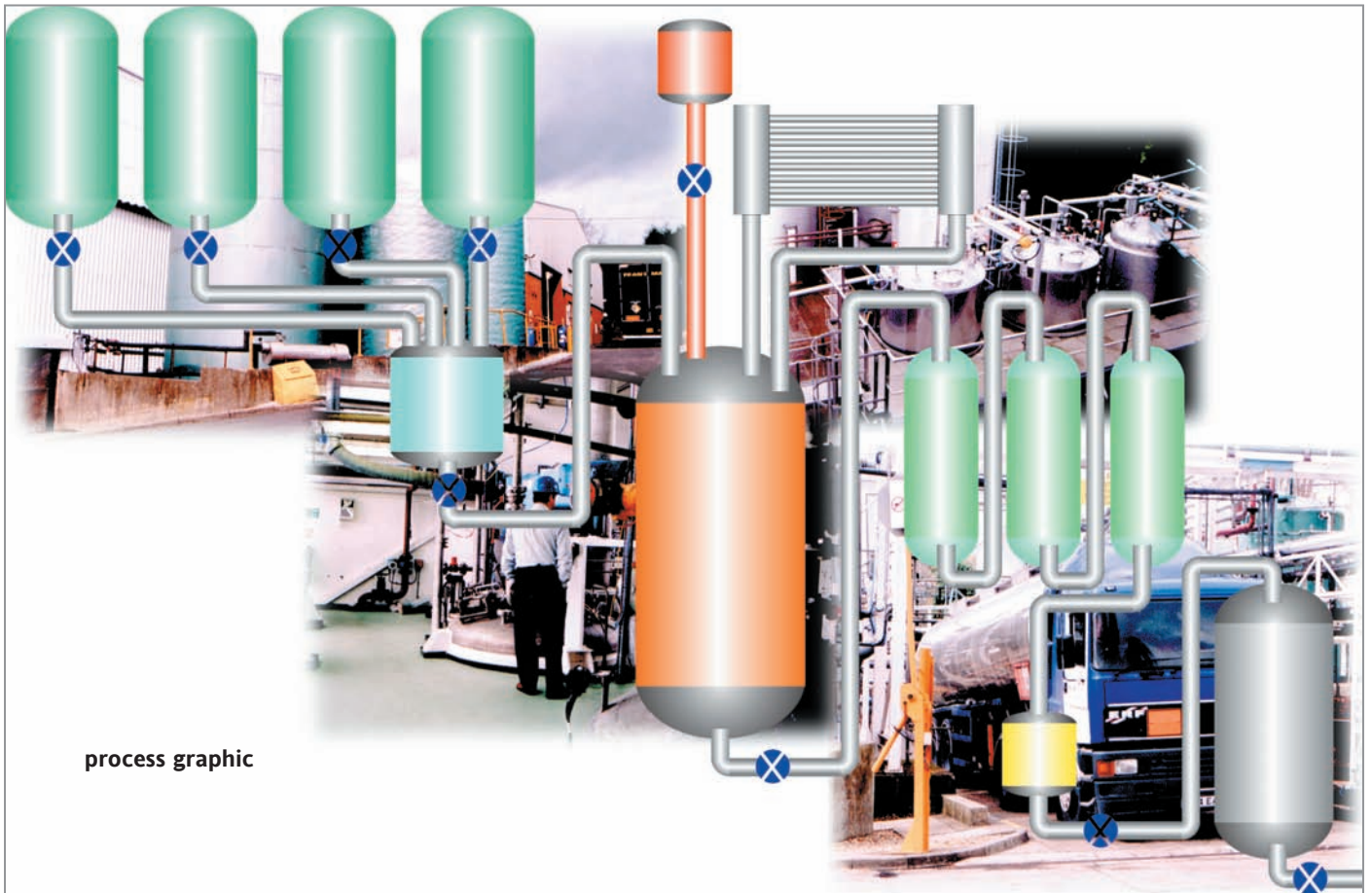
The project has proved so successful that National had no hesitation in selecting SolutionsPT Wonderware’s InBatch software as the preferred system to handle the complex batching and integration requirements of both the additional reactors and the current

system. “The relationship between the SI and the end user is all important in delivering an ongoing site improvement programme”, says Mark Saxton of Stratos. Peter Jones agrees, “Perhaps the most important factor in the accomplishment of this project was the close working relationship between National, Stratos and SolutionsPT which enabled me to manage successfully the transition to the new style controls, and fully realise National’s objectives.” SolutionsPT’s ‘S’ Plan also provides an excellent, comprehensive support agreement, backing up the best technology available with peace of mind for National.

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finished product





process graphic

Wonderware UK wishes to thank the following companies for their valued contribution to this success story...

National Starch

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