

## Clover to boost volumes with ApplyIT scheduling solution



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ApplyIT Press Release

### South African dairy giant Clover has implemented Infor Advanced Scheduling to optimise the use of production resources and increase throughput at four production sites.

With R3,9 billion in annual revenue, Clover is the largest dairy company in South Africa and is responsible for processing more than 30% of the country's milk as well as manufacturing a wide range of dairy-related products such as beverages and desserts.

Infor Advanced Scheduling is a proven solution designed to handle the unique characteristics and complexities of process-related industries. ApplyIT, local IT specialist for the process manufacturing industry, distributes, implements and supports the Infor supply chain solutions within South Africa.



Nicie Vorster, logistics manager at Clover SA, says that at the outset of the project, the company wanted to improve the visibility and reliability of its production schedules, and optimise resources to increase productivity and throughput. All this had to be achieved without increasing production costs.

Clover also required a facility to manage scenario planning and to predict in the longer term whether their factories would be able to handle increases in volumes, changes in product mixes and various other changes.

"We had been scheduling daily operations using Excel, but the process had become too complicated and data analysis had become too cumbersome and time-consuming. We required the dexterity of more powerful software to handle higher volumes of information and to plot different scenarios," says Vorster.

Vorster says a year was spent researching potential scheduling solutions. "As we sought a scheduling solution that was the best fit for our business and industry needs, Infor was identified as the most functionally complete, proven solution for us as a dairy producer and an organisation with an intricate supply chain network," says Vorster. "Infor was the only software that produced schedules that were consistently feasible based on process-specific requirements," says Vorster.

During 2004 the solution was rolled out to three of Clover's production sites, as well as being used at the company's head office in Roodepoort for scenario planning. Clover has subsequently extended the licence for the scheduling solution to include a fourth production site.

Infor provides Clover with unique scheduling functionality to handle volume-constrained resources such as tanks, silos and pipelines. The tool enables Clover to create optimised production schedules that handle by-products, sequencing issues, shelf life considerations, as well as variations in inputs and outputs.

Typical benefits derived from Infor Advanced Scheduling include the reduced impact of unplanned events, a significant increase in plant utilisation without increasing capital expenditure, and a substantial reduction in changeover cycle.

The solution has been live since December 2004 and, according to Vorster, the benefits are already evident. "One of the most important benefits so far has been visibility – at any given time it is easy to see where we are in the production schedule and can evaluate the possible effects that changes at one end of the production chain will have on the end product. This helps us to be more proactive and plan in advance when we see a potential problem approaching. "Generating schedules has become faster, which in turn allows sufficient time for rescheduling if things go wrong."

"From a more strategic perspective we are looking forward to capturing vast amounts of scheduling knowledge in the system. This will give us considerable advantage, because until now, Clover was at risk of schedulers leaving the company with valuable production scheduling knowledge locked in their heads. Infor will enable us to build a bank of historical reference data for scheduling that will allow us to drive continuous improvement," says Vorster.

Vorster says Clover plans to use the tool to create master plans for all its factories, not only for scheduling the maintenance and replacement of critical equipment but for the justification of capital expenditure.

"To produce detailed, optimal schedules, food and beverage manufacturers need tools that account for the unique requirements of their industry," says Gavin Halse, MD of ApplyIT. "While a number of companies offer scheduling solutions, Infor's in-depth knowledge and experience in solving scheduling problems in batch and continuous flow environments are strong differentiators. Infor has a number of global clients in the food and beverage industry and the solutions are well proven. In the case of Clover the experience of the Infor and ApplyIT consultants, and the commitment from the Clover project team were leveraged to result in a successful implementation that led to rapid and sustainable business benefit."

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