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IT solutions become an important competitive factor OSCo provides SAP solutions for the metal industry

Mannheim (WS). Many steel and aluminium distributors and their service centers would like to improve their customer relations and offer even more treatment and complex production processes. Here, the right selection of IT solutions plays a decisive role, as Hans Jürgen Olbricht, Managing Director of the solution provider OSCo discusses with 'stahlmarkt'.



Hans Jürgen Olbricht

■ Mr. Olbricht, what do you offer to your customers?

■ We are a consulting and software house which specializes in production and sales logistics. Our solutions are based on SAP standard and make it possible to generate the necessary master data in SAP and to collect, process, and distribute plant related data in real-time. The correctness of data ensures high security in the involved business processes. Active and passive sub-con-

tracting and consignment stores are considered as well as third-party deals and the control of pickups and transport along with the support of the SAP typical direct value flow.

Above all, we see our strength in multi-variant products. Our solutions effectively consider the differences in manufacturing depth, manufacturing technologies, and order processing times.

To this counts the transfer of customer demands in offers as well as the consideration of the special requirements for an intensive quality management along with the consideration of high order processing speed. Companies with a manufacturing spectrum of treatments for own company parts with a continuous material flow in a common system across several plants – also in different countries – especially participate of this OSCo approach.

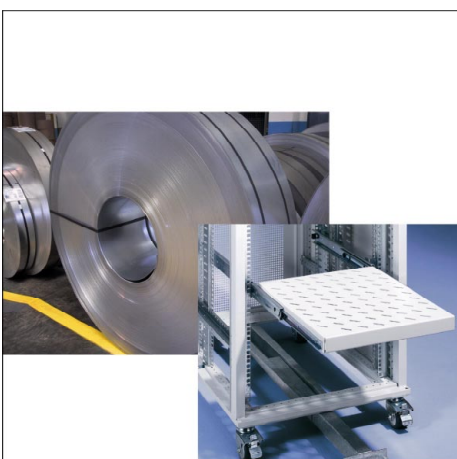
■ Your company is relatively young, how has it emerged?

■ OSCo was founded 1996 by a group of former SAP collaborators. We

started with whole SAP implementations and optimizations for the paper and textile industry. Along with this came further developments and highly optimized solutions in SAP, which we worked on together with our customers. After successfully offering solutions for the paper industry, we expanded our range of activities to further multi-variant industries. Today we are active throughout Europe.

■ Which industries are meant by „multi-variant“?

■ We focus on the steel and metal industry, especially the processing and finishing companies, because they ask for quality management, and back-tracing plays an enormous role. The multi-variance ranges here from different tolerances for the



chemical and mechanical values to the dimensions, their tolerances and packaging wishes etc., and assembly variants in the higher manufacturing levels.

Often each partial delivery has to be documented. Our customers mostly want to know exactly, where the delivered material comes from, which metallurgical characteristics it has and which manufacturing processes it has been run through. Possibly in the multi-step manufacturing there is a change of characteristics, for example by surface realizations, cold rolling, annealing and hardening. All this has to be collected and documented with the software.

For example, we have efficiently implemented in two sites of a steel service center a SAP environment representing the standard logistic processes. Our integrated plant data collection enables a consistent back-tracing.

Furthermore, we equipped a company group with a wide range of steel products with a SAP solution covering all its manufacturing steps. Big companies are an important part of our business, but we also value business from trade companies with treatments. They must enhance their customer loyalty as well as survive in the market.

■ Which production processes do you have solutions for?

■ Our solutions start with the procurement of hot rolled material. Steel cooking and the hot rolling itself are done in big companies, which are normally ideally equipped with software.

The following production processes are our specialty, i.e. treatment and further processing. We realized that for the production and also an optimized material flow some software was missing, which covered continuously all procurement processes from the customer order to the selection of adequate materials in the production regarding quality requirements. Some of these processes are slitting and cutting coils, surface refining, edge processing, manufacturing tubes and profiles, punching and ends processing along with cutting with laser, plasma or water jet and the manufacturing of assembly groups.

We see the advantages of our solutions clearly in the fact that our customers do not need to work with multiple insular solutions. These solutions – integrated in SAP ERP – enable the unlimited development of a company, independent of the question if the manufacturing depth has to be achieved across local companies and how the manufacturing technologies are distributed to the respective sites.

■ Which are your newest solutions?

■ We have learned that in the metal industry the reference to standards and their thresholds is very important. There are standards which describe tolerances, configurations or the mechanical stability, and there are existing derived thresholds. Our software allows the assignment of a product within these thresholds. Standards and their thresholds are not delivered directly usable by the publisher.

We have created the necessary tables and sets of rules in SAP; therefore, the needed standards can be saved in a structured way.

Furthermore, we have recently published a MES overview (Manufacturing Execution System), refer to www.osco.de/mes-buch. Here, it is possible to read up on our solutions in detail, concerning production planning, fine planning, analysis, material flow or our services.

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