Legacy system modernization at Domtar results in exceptional customer service, improved production uptime and an agile supply chain.

Background

Domtar designs, manufactures, markets and distributes a wide variety of fiber-based products including communication papers, specialty and packaging papers and absorbent hygiene products. Domtar is the largest integrated marketer and manufacturer of uncoated freesheet paper in North America. With $5.6 billion in revenue in 2014, Domtar operates in the Pulp and Paper and Personal Care business segments. Domtar produces 4.1 million metric tons of hardwood, softwood and fluff pulp at 12 of its 13 mills.

Existing Environment

Domtar has manufacturing facilities in the U.S. and Canada. Its manufacturing mills produce roll paper products and its converting locations produce retail cut sheet paper. Each location has laser and large format printers and its own local Manufacturing Execution System (MES) server. Various types of labels are printed at production time and shipping.

Through industry consolidation, Domtar had multiple mergers and acquisitions that provided the company with a portfolio of different manufacturing systems; each producing its own label formats. Two sales systems that were completely separate from the manufacturing systems captured and hosted customer order information.

Business Goal

Domtar's main business objective was to modernize legacy systems to deliver consistent labeling and improve customer service.

Challenges

No Label Integration with Manufacturing and Sales Systems

Domtar's manufacturing and sales systems weren't integrated for label processing. Customers would request that specific information that was critical to their business be included on the label. This information was captured in the sales system while labels were printed from the manufacturing system. Because there was no integration between the two systems, customer labels were manually maintained and potentially could be inconsistent. Domtar needed a consistent way to ensure critical customer information appeared on the label.

Label and Brand Inconsistency

Each of Domtar's disparate manufacturing systems produced its own label formats. When customers received product from two different locations, they would have different labels. Domtar elected to centrally manage labels with a variety of mill systems publishing print requests. They also needed to centrally manage the development of the templates and have a mechanism to easily deploy changes to multiple locations.

Domtar prides itself on maintaining high levels of sustainability. The company couldn't dynamically print sustainability certifications because of the limitations of the legacy systems.

Strict SLAs

Speed and agility are important components in Domtar's supply chain. The Domtar mills set strict Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Labels needed to be produced on automated machinery in less than 15 seconds. A Wide Area Network (WAN) outage would be crippling to production so Domtar needed to ensure label printing software was centrally hosted and also available locally at each site.

Solutions

With NiceLabel, Domtar was able to modernize its label system without impacting its existing MES.

Seamless Integration

Domtar created business rules within the NiceLabel solution to integrate its MES and sales systems to take input of label data in a variety of formats. Customer label request information from the sales systems is now available in the MES systems. Domtar can easily and efficiently print labels when a roll or skid is produced. Labels are printed as the product moves on the conveyor and robotics are used to apply the labels.

Centralized Approach to Labeling

Domtar has moved from a disparate labeling system to a centralized approach. They now have centralized design, review and approval of labels, version control, and the ability to track label changes.

All customer facing product labels are standardized on common label templates with the same design layout and content across all paper manufacturing execution systems. Hundreds of label templates have been reduced to 20. In addition, product identification for rolls and skids is standardized to the (North American Roll Identifier) NARI format across all locations.

They are also able to design colorful labels that include their branding and sustainability certifications.

Streamlined Workflows

Label data is merged with label templates, enabling faster turnaround for customer and business label change requests. Domtar now has support for built in redundancy. If there is a hardware failure, labeling shifts to a secondary distribution center in another location ensuring steady production levels and business continuity.

Results

> **"**
> *We are very happy with the NiceLabel technology. Implementation was easy and it allows us to provide our customers with top notch service that helps their supply chains run more efficiently.*
>
> Mark Seren, IT Project Manager, Domtar

Improved Customer Service

Domtar's customers receive consistent labeling from all of the facilities that supply their product. A customer friendly label design allows a more complete product description to appear on each label. Domtar's customers are delighted with the labeling changes that have been implemented and the operational and supply chain delays have since disappeared.

New Levels of Accuracy and Agility

Domtar is experiencing agility that they didn't previously have. Now, products can be sourced out of their various mill locations. Labels can be printed from different locations, regardless of where the product is manufactured. Standardized labeling allowed manufacturing and sales and marketing to evaluate what information should be displayed on labels. They were able to implement changes that make their customers more efficient as Domtar's supply chain exchanges information with its customers' supply chains.

Improved Production Uptime

Since implementing the NiceLabel Label Management Solution, Domtar maintains a high level of production uptime and meets its strict SLAs while supporting a 24x7 operation. They saw an improved delivery time for customer label demands by using a common template and label software solution. proves cycle times and reduces the overall time spent on labeling.

NiceLabel®

About the NiceLabel LMS
The NiceLabel LMS includes everything you need to centralize label management and control, integrate labeling into business processes and harness collaboration across and beyond the enterprise. It includes centralized browser-based label lifecycle management, a 64-bit all-in-one server with business connectors, business logic and a print engine, and client-side web printing that improves internal and external collaboration. NiceLabel's unique next-generation platform delivers greater supply chain efficiency and agility at substantially reduced operational costs.

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