

SOUR QUALITY PRODUCTS SMOOTHLY TRANSMITTED

Food manufacturer Hengstenberg updates its EAI infrastructure and replaces a legacy system by *FIS/xee*.



Customer

- Hengstenberg GmbH & Co. KG
- Founding year: 1876
- Headquarters: Esslingen
- Employees: approximately 500

Industry

- Food

Key figures

- Partner connections: 44
- Message formats: 4
- Mappings: 10
- Locations in Germany: 3

Challenge

The EDI converter previously used by Hengstenberg was technically outdated and not maintained any longer. The company was looking for a new, advanced solution for process integration that is integrated in SAP as deeply as possible.

Solution

- *FIS/xee* – B2B Solution

Benefits

At Hengstenberg, *FIS/xee* reliably manages data exchange in the background with almost the entire German commercial landscape. Due to the SAP integration, the monitoring of the transmission processes is extremely convenient. Furthermore, the solution can be easily enhanced by a company's own IT professionals and adjusted to individual requirements.

Usually, middleware systems for electronic data exchange work quietly and efficiently in the background. Once they are outdated and no longer technically enhanced, the communication with external partners might get stuck. This is why food manufacturer Hengstenberg from Esslingen decided to install *FIS/xee* in 2014. For many years, FIS has been Hengstenberg's consultant partner for warehouse logistics and has supported the company in building new infrastructure for the storage area - an appropriate basis for the decision to rely on *FIS/xee* as an SAP-certified and expandable solution for Enterprise Application Integration (EAI) in the future.

"Many products in the EDI environment are rather based on an individual user interface. With the FIS solution, however, everything can be configured, controlled and monitored from SAP."

Paul Schmidt,
IT employee at Hengstenberg



Hengstenberg food can be found in almost any supermarket in Germany. The traditional Swabian company has all large food retailers among its customers. With them, Hengstenberg exchanges various message types: inbound sales orders, outbound delivery notes, shipping orders and invoices. In the past, these documents were sent via fax or mail and purchase orders were entered manually in SAP. Twelve persons used to be involved in order processing at Hengstenberg.

These times have been over for a long time; meanwhile, messages are transmitted via EDI. An EDI converter converts IDoc formats generated from SAP into EDIFACT standard and sends them to the partners via X.400 data exchange and via Telebox. Advantage of EDI traffic: Paper printouts are omitted and information is only sent in electronic form. Order forms do no longer have to be read and checked but automatically transferred to the ERP system.

Advanced solution for process integration

As the previous converter was technically outdated and no longer maintained, Hengstenberg made a decision in spring 2014 to replace it by an advanced process integration solution. The aim was to use a system integrated in SAP as deeply as possible in the future.

“In this area, many products are rather based on an individual user interface. With the *FIS/xee* solution, however, everything can be configured, controlled and monitored from SAP,” says Paul Schmidt, IT employee at Hengstenberg. “This results in a particularly high level of user convenience, which is the key advantage of the *FIS* solution for us.”

In 2014, *FIS/xee* successively went live within three months, starting with orders and followed by deliveries and shipping orders. As requested by Hengstenberg, migration was to take place as quietly as the later daily operation. The existing functional scope of the legacy system had to be transferred 1:1 to *FIS/xee* to ensure that the partners involved can receive and process their data as before. Existing IDocs and user exits in SAP had to continue to work without additional efforts, just as the conversion of the EAN (European Article Number) and GTIN (Global Trade Item Number) numbers customary in the trade area. Here, *FIS* was responsible

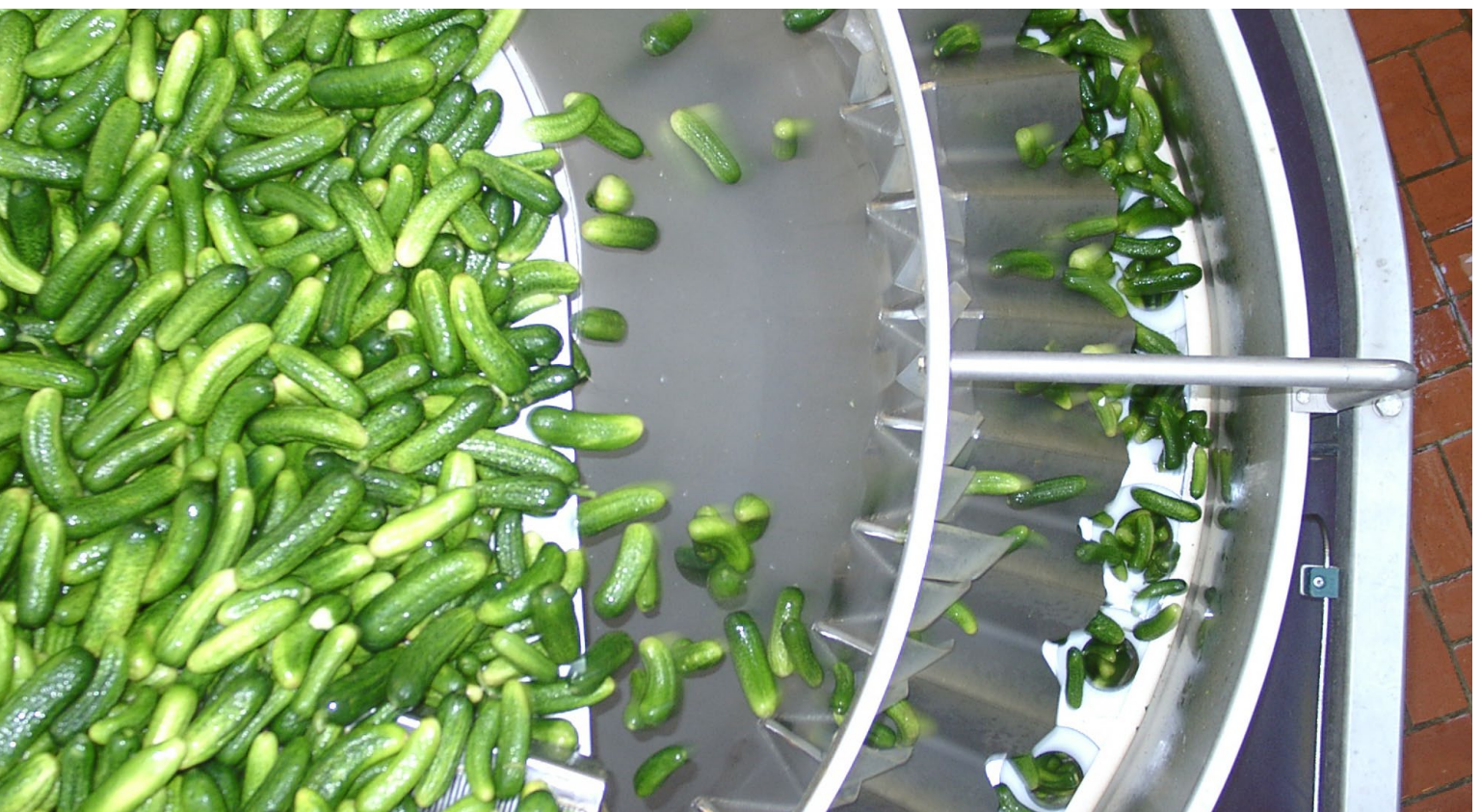
for the complete project management including go live support and follow-up assistance. The migration was completed within three months - “mostly without making noise,” confirms Frank Müller, SAP/EDI professional at Hengstenberg.

Entire German commercial landscape connected

Currently, the SAP system of Hengstenberg is connected via *FIS/xee* to almost the entire German commercial landscape plus a small export share for Luxemburg, Belgium and Spain. On the whole, there are 44 partner connections. Every year, the company receives some 11,000 sales orders and sends 24,000 shipping notifications as well as 20,000 invoices using *FIS/xee*. If a truck leaves the premises of a Hengstenberg production site, customers already know what goods will arrive at their premises, thanks to the shipping notifications transmitted. The notifications contain the so-called NVE numbers of the pallets transported. Customers scan the number, know what goods the pallet contains due to the notifications and, as a consequence, can automatically process their goods receipt.

“The fact that we transmit important information via EDI in advance via shipping notifications, is a prerequisite that we are allowed to supply these customers at all,” Paul Schmidt explains. “Without such technology, we could no longer survive any more on the market.” Furthermore, the logistics service providers obtain their shipping orders via EDI, which Hengstenberg uses to inform them as to what delivery is sent to a specific place at a particular time and with a certain weight. Here, the enterprise cooperates with four service providers, each of whom receives three shipping orders per day.

For outbound messages, *FIS/xee* converts IDocs into the EDIFACT format and vice versa for inbound messages. Some



customers have individual requirements for the EDIFACT format, which differ from the standard format. For these cases, customer-specific mappings have been created in *FIS/xee* to generate the requested EDIFACT format from the IDoc. For inbound messages, only one mapping is available; the formats for incoming orders are standardized there and have hardly any variants. Generally, the number of messages tends to decrease, but their contents increase, as Paul Schmidt describes his observations. Reason: The commercial landscape increasingly focuses on central distribution centers, i.e. orders do no longer come from each supermarket, but arrive in bundles via the warehouses.

Solution individually expandable by own IT team

Although the aim of replacing the old EDI tool was initially a 1:1 implementation of the previous functionality, it rapidly became apparent that the SAP integration of *FIS/xee* also makes the monitoring of the transmission processes much more convenient as it works directly from SAP. Furthermore, the *FIS* optimization can be adjusted to individual requirements by a company's own IT professionals without always requiring the manufacturer's support. "For future adjustments and enhancements, we expect more simplicity and less complexity," Paul Schmidt explains. "The possibility of independently implementing individual requirements was one of our selection criteria."



"With FIS/xee, we have an instrument enabling us to accept any kind of format via different communication channels in the future and convert it into a format that can be read by SAP."

Frank Müller,
SAP and EDI expert at Hengstenberg

As a consequence, the Hengstenberg administrators can independently set up new partners or message types in *FIS/xee* and make partner-specific mapping adjustments. Inbound shipping notifications sent by vendors to Hengstenberg would be such new message types. Needless to say that innovations of this type must be coordinated with the vendors. From a technical point of view, most of them have not yet been able to send shipping notifications via EDI. "However, many of them have caught up in the meantime and have adapted what the food retail industry has done first," Frank Müller explains. "With *FIS/xee*, we have an instrument enabling us to accept any kind of format via different communication channels in the future and convert it into a format that can be read by SAP."

The SAP integration of *FIS/xee* is another advantage for Hengstenberg when it comes to archiving: The SAP system is connected to an audit-proof archive system via ArchiveLink interface. Now, inbound and outbound EDIFACT files can be directly ar-



100 % of the cucumbers used for popular products such as KNAX and STICKSi have been cultivated in Germany.

chived with the associated SAP document, e.g. an invoice with your SAP billing document. In the archive system, Hengstenberg has established a separate content repository for EDIFACT documents.

System "stands in the corner and works"

Paul Schmidt's requirement to his EAI solution is that it "stands in the corner and works". It is precisely the same with *FIS/xee*. The system does not have to be constantly controlled, but the daily monitoring takes place from SAP instead of incidentally.

With three colleagues dealing with the SAP landscape, Hengstenberg would not have the capacity for someone exclusively attending to EDI. "Thanks to the SAP integration, analysis options are excellent," Paul Schmidt reports. "We can monitor anything up to EDI message level from the ERP system.

If an error occurs during transmission, we will proactively receive a message via e-mail.” The Hengstenberg IT team also appreciates the process monitoring across several EDI transmissions via reference. Based on a specific key figure, all transmissions concerning a certain object can be jointly monitored here. Documents belonging together are displayed as such and, consequently, can be found faster.



Hengstenberg GmbH & Co. KG

Hengstenberg GmbH & Co. KG is a traditional, family-run company and has specialized in fine pickled quality products for 140 years. Its assortment comprising sauerkraut, red cabbage, vinegar, sourly inserted cucumbers and vegetables, mustard, delicatessen products and Italian tomato specialties offer high cooking diversity to any cuisine. The family enterprise employs some 500 persons at three locations in Germany. The company exports in more than 40 countries, among them, in particular, other EU countries but also the US, Russia and Japan.



FIS Informationssysteme und Consulting GmbH

FIS Informationssysteme und Consulting GmbH is an expanding, independent company and forms the umbrella of the FIS Group. Within this group, more than 800 employees work to make companies more modern, more economical and more competitive every day. The focus of FIS is on SAP projects and the development of efficient solutions that drive digitalization in companies. As one of the leading SAP system houses in the D-A-CH region, FIS is the market leader in technical wholesale with its complete solution FIS/wws. Together with its subsidiary Medienwerft, FIS covers the complete SAP range of topics for the Customer Experience (CX) area.

In the subsidiary FIS-ASP, more than 100 specialists operate and administer customers' SAP systems in their own data centers in southern Germany. The subsidiary FIS-SST is a competent partner for nearshoring projects. Collaborative solutions for the convenient and secure process handling of different companies on common platforms are developed at the subsidiary FIS-iLog.



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