

# Success Story

## Make an inventory of machinery to define digitalisation opportunities for Wouters NV

Improve production planning and obtain efficiency improvement





# Make an inventory of machinery to define digitalisation opportunities

## Company description

Wouters is a dynamic, innovative, customer service-oriented company with international ambitions. The company is active within B2B and supplies both branded and as well as private label products to the bakery sector, the food service sector and the food industry. In addition, Wouters also offers co-manufacturing services tailored to the customer's needs, based on their competencies in developing, blending and packaging vegetable and animal oils & fats and powdered ingredients. Their product range includes bread-making ingredients, frying oils & fats and shortenings.



## Motivation/Starting Point

Wouters applied to the Cotemaco support programme to have a scan of digitalisation opportunities in order to improve production planning and obtain efficiency improvement. Also, they needed to calculate more correct product cost prices. There

was a lot of people's work involved in the process, which lead to inefficiency, faults in cost price calculation and inconsistency in theoretical and actual stock. Moreover, too much knowledge and experience with the complete process was only available on paper and in the minds of those responsible for production. The challenge was to obtain a full overview of the production site with all its machines and installations. From incoming raw materials to finished goods. Parts of the processes were already automated and digitalized, which was important to take into account with the proposed solution.



## Technical realization

Based on the challenges and requirements of Wouters, a focus on a MOMS-implementation was chosen as the preferred solution. A MOMS (Manufacturing Operations Management System) is a system that will steer and monitor operational activities on the basis of master data and operational input (people, machines, software). In doing so, it uses computer systems and equipment intended for recording data, for example scanners and sensors. On the basis of the information received, MOMS can verify the operational activities and make adjustments where necessary.

In a MOMS implementation, the goal is to vertically integrate the various levels within the ISA-95 model: the international standard for the integration of production automation systems.

This vertical integration contributes to, for example, avoiding paper on the production floor, people manually entering machine parameters on machines and people having to type information from system to system.

To achieve this vertical integration, all critical machines and systems will need to be equipped with communication capabilities. Obsolete systems must be replaced and obsolete relay controls must be automated. In addition, it must be possible to receive data from the Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP) via interfacing and to deliver data from the production environment digitally to the ERP system.

In the future, a MOM system will be set up to control all operational activities on the work floor, such as logistics, production, quality and maintenance.



## Result

A useful study was delivered helping the company to define its future digitalisation strategy. It proves the need to digitalize all the knowledge and experience that is now available on paper and in people's heads as additional information to the master data in the MOMS system.

By realizing this, the production process will be less dependent on the knowledge and experience of people and the chance of human errors will be avoided. In addition, the paperwork will be drastically reduced and Excel as a tool on the work floor will become obsolete.

## Interview

*Pieter Maes, Operations Manager at Wouters:*

"Our challenge was to be able to calculate more correct product cost prices, to improve our production planning and to realise operational efficiency improvements. We were convinced that digitalisation was one of the major answers to our challenge. Thanks to the support of Cotemaco, we were able to perform a scan of our digitalisation readiness in order to possibly install a MOMS platform.

A useful document was delivered helping the company to define its future digitalisation strategy. We obtained a clear view on the possibilities and the budget. The scan will serve as a basis for possible future investments.

### Were your expectations fulfilled – technical implementation and support through COTEMACO?

"Our expectations were fulfilled. The team performed a very useful analysis of the AS IS situation, proposed a TO BE situation with detailed user requirements and budgeting. Technical implementation has not started yet. Overall I would say: great work."

### How could Cotemaco support you?

Via the SME support programme, COTEMACO engages with SMEs from the automotive and food sectors through field labs. These regional field labs in the Netherlands, the UK, Belgium and Germany are showcasing key production steps in the automotive and food industries, in order to tackle current low sectorial awareness and knowledge gaps. The field labs will exchange knowledge on different manufacturing tasks, such as handling and (un)loading. With the COTEMACO programme, manufacturing SMEs are guided through the process of adopting collaborative robotic and shop floor digitalisation technologies, from the exploration of technological opportunities to the detailed definition of a business plan.



## What is COTEMACO?

The project, which is an initiative of Interreg North-West Europe, aims to support around 60 SMEs in the automotive and food manufacturing industries with so-called „test environments“ and to encourage them to integrate collaborative robotic systems and digital technologies into their business. Accordingly, in addition to increasing production flexibility, the relocation of production abroad will be curbed and the number of jobs in manufacturing increased, which will generally lead to an improvement in the competitiveness of the companies involved.

In the project new technologies are implemented in application examples - the aim is to move from the prototype in the laboratory environment to the transfer to production, taking into account the legal situation and certifications.

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Implementation partner:

**[www.flandersmake.be](http://www.flandersmake.be)**

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