

The bread and butter of group-wide continuous improvement

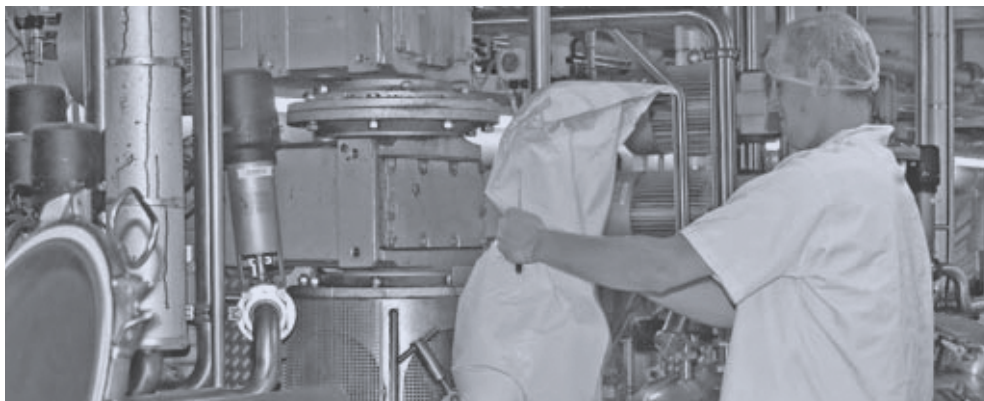
BRITISH BAKERIES, the bread producing division of Premier Foods (previously RHM), is very familiar with high volume, high-pressure manufacturing process. Producing the nation's daily bread to the tune of over 2 million loaves a day requires precision operation, efficient production and a skilled, professional workforce. At British Bakeries these features are supported by the use of a group-wide OEE system from Idhammar that delivers timely, reliable and accurate performance measures together with the detail necessary for a team-based approach to continuous improvement. In the last five years this has resulted in a 15% increase in productivity and savings of millions of pounds.

One of the UK's largest plant bread bakers, British Bakeries has over 6,500 employees and supplies around one third of the UK's daily bread. With household brands including Hovis, Mothers-Pride and Nimble, British Bakeries produces 16 million loaves in 450 different varieties every week. That's in addition to 850 other bakery products including crumpets, scones, rolls, croissants and pancakes.

OEE as part of a clear strategy

In 1998, Bob King, the visionary Manufacturing Director of the Baked Bread Division of Premier Foods (now Head of Operational Excellence of Premier Foods), implemented a group-wide system to measure Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) to support continuous improvement programmes and to provide a consistent bench-mark across the 15 bakery sites.

"With the Idhammar OEE System I have a handle on the top five production issues at each bakery and know what is being done to resolve them. The OEE system provides consistent, real-time and detailed reporting. It enables the individual Bakery Managers and their teams to drill down, find the underlying problems and quickly address them."





Right from the outset of the project Bob was clear on his requirement for the OEE system - to provide the foundation for his strategy to increase productivity, improve individual skill levels and enhance industrial relations. Idhammar's OEE system was able to support him in gaining results in all areas of his clear three-point strategy:

1. INCREASED PRODUCTION EFFICIENCY

Within the first year, the OEE system helped to identify previously hidden production losses that amounted to an annual figure of over £1million in wasted labour alone.

"In addition to savings in labour and wastage, we have experienced significant savings in energy. Optimised OEE also has a hugely beneficial impact on our energy-efficiencies."

2. IMPROVED SKILL LEVELS

The powerful drill down capability together with a built-in improvement agenda enabled individuals at all levels to gain a deeper insight into production processes, develop a greater awareness of the related commercial value and generate more robust issue management processes.

3. ENHANCED INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The OEE system provides clear scores and reporting across the entire production process. It encourages a culture of continuous improvement across all departments, minimising finger-pointing and blame.

37 sites on a single database

British Bakeries were originally as an amalgam of independent plant bakers brought together by the McDougall's flour concern, later joining Rank Hovis McDougall and more recently acquired by Premier Foods.

Today the Bread Bakeries division is the largest vertically integrated baker and flour miller in the UK. RHM mills produce over a million tonnes of flour every year, with over half being used in the bread bakeries and other Premier Divisions. Over 220 different types of flour are delivered to external customers in both bulk and bagged form.

In 2006 all 37 RHM sites were brought together under the Idhammar OEE system under a single database and were close to achieving the world-class standard of 85% OEE within 6 months of implementation.

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Idhammar's OEE is a powerful system that plays an important role in supporting the world-class manufacturing required by Premier's British Bakeries.

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BOB KING,
HEAD OF OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE,
PREMIER FOODS

