

## Bringing a Touch of Colour to Control Technology



### INFO



<b>Company:</b>	Brillux
<b>Sector:</b>	Coatings
<b>Location:</b>	Various
<b>Country:</b>	Germany

**A leading international manufacturer of paints and varnishes was looking for a new process control system for its production operations. A system tailored to the specific requirements and needs of the company and the provision of intensive support and advice were both seen as crucial. A system developer from southern Germany offered the ideal solution.**

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Brillux is a manufacturer and direct supplier offering a complete range of paints and varnishes. The independent family-run company has four production locations in Münster, Unna, Herford and Malsch near Karlsruhe; the paints and varnishes are sold directly to professional users through more than 160 outlets in Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland and Poland. Brillux currently employs over 2,400 people. When Brillux decided to replace its outdated control system, the search for a new state-of-the-art solution began. What was wanted was an open system which can be flexibly extended at any time and a partner that can give a high level of support, especially self-help assistance, over a long period. The brand manufacturer was ultimately convinced by the vision and passion of the medium-sized system developer ProLeiT and its process control system Plant Batch iT.

"Thanks to Plant Batch iT, we were able to provide Brillux with several val-

uable interfaces for incorporating the existing production planning system", explains Sascha Schwalenberg, manager at ProLeiT's office in Leverkusen. "These interfaces can be extended as required and saved the client lots of time and money."

### Bringing staff into the fold

In view of production requirements, it seems quite plausible to Schwalenberg that Brillux wanted its support services, in particular, to remain self-contained: "If something doesn't go to plan, it's obviously important to keep production running and downtime to a minimum." ProLeiT guaranteed this by bringing competent staff of the client into the fold at an early stage of the project.

This was vital to ensure they gained maximum effect from the new opportunities and special features of the system from the word go. Through extensive cooperation, combined with further on-site training provided by ProLeiT, it

was possible to implement the necessary changes and meet specific requirements and objectives in the shortest time frame possible.

Today, the positive impacts of this close cooperation and constant knowledge transfer from vendor to client can be found throughout the entire support process. Maintenance work and preventative measures can be carried out on a case-by-case basis, thus cutting the amount of time required to respond to problems. Sascha Schwalenberg: "The newly installed system provides both ProLeiT and Brillux with the diagnostic tools to significantly facilitate fault finding. The higher speed and accuracy of the system save the operator a considerable amount of time overall."

Beyond its use in the production line, Plant Batch iT also delivers a tailored reporting system. "This makes creating and analysing reports for specific ongoing production applications much



The Brillux plant in Münster

easier,” says Sascha Schwalenberg. Supplier orders can also be planned using the control system.

### Saying goodbye to isolated applications

In addition, the control system technology means the four Brillux production facilities will eventually operate to the same requirements and standards. The previous control system resulted in Brillux having to cope with a number of various isolated applications. “We were able to either integrate them into the projects or they were incorporated as part of subsequent projects,” Sascha Schwalenberg explains. Once implementation has been completed, the client can work with just one system and, therefore, just one point of contact. This also meant that ProLeiT did not have to

establish interfaces to existing isolated applications; as they were simply integrated into the system.

Re-implementing systems during ongoing production at a client’s manufacturing facilities is always a challenge, and Brillux was no different to other manufacturers. In this specific project, old systems were replaced with the new one – plant by plant – at the turn of the year. The first Brillux plant to receive a new system was the varnish production facility in Münster at the end of 2012, beginning of 2013. One year later it was the turn of the emulsion production facility at the same site, and the plant in Unna was commissioned. This was followed in 2014/2015 by the plant in Malsch, and the new control system will be implemented at the plant in Herford at the end of 2016.

### Restructuring at the turn of the year

In order to keep downtime to a minimum, hardware components were replaced in advance; this demanded temporary connection of the old system to the new one.

“Once again,” adds Sascha Schwalenberg, “we were always on time and in budget and, by focusing on different sections of the plant, were able to replace components as part of a several-stage procedure. This progressive method ensured the production processes were not negatively affected during each phase. A further advantage of the new system is the ability to simulate trial operation when the plant is running. This gives clients peace of mind when enhancing existing production lines and constructing new ones in the future.” The process of planning, implementing and operating Plant Batch iT convinced Brillux to continue cooperating with ProLeiT also when it comes to extending systems. In its role as a standard system supplier, ProLeiT will also be responsible for hardware and software integration during the construction of new production lines.



The new process control technology is also used in the Brillux plant in Münster.