

Remote Access Provides Court-Side Support of Chemical Trial



BACKGROUND

The current COVID-19 pandemic has curtailed the ability for much field trial support in the Paper Industry. For this customer site located in Louisiana, a Nalco Water Paper Industry Technical Consultant (ITC) that was scheduled to support the trial, was called off at the 11th hour due to an increase in COVID-19 risk. Trial support was able to be accomplished via remote access to the paper mill's SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) system, where the supporting ITC was able to monitor the trial live from across the country. This case study highlights how this was accomplished.

SITUATION

Machine cleanliness in the forming and press sections on this paper machine was suffering due to high "fines" loading because of poor fiber "retention"; in-turn creating a negative impact on overall

machine efficiency (OME). Running a retention aid can improve machine cleanliness, improve OME, and reduce raw material consumption. A trial proposal has been in place with this customer for two years, and market conditions with the current pandemic have created a situation of great demand for linerboard due to the increase in on-line ordering. Therefore, the machines within this customer's company have been running low on supply due to higher demands.

SOLUTION

Fortunately, the sales representative was able to provide remote access to the paper mill's SCADA system and the supporting ITC had "digitally configured" the paper machine during a previous visit. Digitization allowed the ITC to monitor the trial live from across the country and remotely sit in the control room as the trial unfolded.

ANNUAL SAVINGS

COSTS

\$560K
FROM FIBER SAVINGS

PRODUCTIVITY

\$385K
FROM DECREASED DOWNTIME
DUE TO BREAKS

VALUE DELIVERED

\$945K
ANNUALLY

While the sales team was busy making changes, performing tests, meeting with customers, and coordinating the trial, the ITC was able to monitor the trial and make observations/recommendations to the team in real-time. This took the task of monitoring performance off the local sales team's plate, which allowed them to focus on the logistics of the trial.

Because the ITC had remote access to the SCADA system, the ITC was able to download the appropriate process data that documented product performance and key process changes; allowing development of a trial performance report as the trial unfolded.

At the end of the trial, a remote trial performance meeting with mill management was conducted within a couple of hours of the trial's completion through remote meeting software in which the trial was reviewed, questions were answered, and supporting data was reviewed. The district manager, who was present at the meeting, commented "As you can imagine, I have a team that has been working long hours for several days under a great deal of stress. By this morning, we were on fumes. The ITC created graphs from TrendGen™ and had a presentation for the RDF trial from beginning to end. He was able to remotely call in for the meeting and

explain many of the events during the trial, almost as if he was there. Present during the meeting was the mill manager, operations manager, machine managers (both machines), and all the supporting engineers. The ITC blew the customers away with his insight. I know we could not have put this level of presentation together before the meeting today."

CONCLUSION

The RDF trial had many interesting positive outcomes, and was "worth a longer look," as quoted by the mill manager. The trial did not upset the paper machine, which would have decreased productivity, enabling Nalco Water to leverage the technical capabilities of an experienced industry technical consultant without bearing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in traveling. In all, the local sales team was able to focus their time and energy into ensuring the trial was running smoothly and covering the manual testing and communication.

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