Braas versiondog Case Study

An Indispensable Data Management Tool at a Roof Tile Production Facility

The kilns at Braas GmbH operate 24 hours a day, every day. Though clay tiles may be a very traditional product, Braas still uses fully automated production lines. Thanks to versiondog, their maintenance staff always has the latest data at hand.

The first Sunday of every month is "backup day" at the Braas clay roof tile factory in Obergräfenhain, Germany. On that day, the facility backs up all the data records for the production line controllers and drives and stores them on a secure central server. AUVESY's versiondog software is their go-to data management tool for automatic data backup and documentation of software versions.

- The monthly process regularly produces 58 backups.
- Braas has created a total of 530 components for PLCs, drive units, sensors, and components for security in versiondog so far.

While Braas produces traditional clay tiles, their production process is anything but archaic.

Why is a data management software necessary for Braas GmbH?

Let's take a closer look at the complexity of this particular fully automated production facility.

- Six production lines produce clay roof tiles.
- A staff of 170 keeps the production facility running.
- The facility produces 77 million pressed roof tiles, plain tiles, and accessories every year.
- The production facility is in operation 7 days a week.
- The facility runs on a shift system, subject to change according to the needs of the production line and capacity utilization.

What does an automated production process for roof tile look like?

First, raw materials like loam and clay are extracted from the surrounding area, crushed, and soaked in a batch mixer.

AUVESY.

After a few days, a tracked excavator takes the material out of the container and conveys it to a silo tank. The production process is fully automated, beginning with the first box feeder. Then, the material is pre-formed in an extrusion press, cut, pressed, and uniformly dried over several hours at temperatures up to 212°F using the residual heat from the kiln. After that, the tiles are heated for several hours and fired at about 1832°F. After completing the extraction and firing processes, the tiles undergo a final quality control check and are packed for shipment.

The production lines run around the clock, seven days a week. This ongoing production process leaves little room for replacing a failed component or resolving unnecessary errors. Fortunately, that's where versiondog comes in.

How has versiondog improved production at Braas?

Janko Köhler is a PLC technician in the maintenance department and a versiondog administrator.

He explains that versiondog helps them avoid costly downtime in their automated production process.

"The kilns are not allowed to go out," Köhler said. "We have one goal: production needs to run. If a malfunction occurs, we need to react immediately and avoid a standstill."

He painfully remembers the time-consuming search for functioning data carriers in the past. Shift work, time restrictions, and differing opinions on how data should be stored resulted in lost data or data that was deemed obsolete. Thankfully, versiondog has made that confusion a thing of the past.

In conclusion, Köhler said, **"It is impossible to imagine all this without versiondog. The software is a central port of contact and all maintenance technicians use it in order to carry out changes to programs."**

ABOUT AUVESY

AUVESY (**AU**tomated **VE**rsioning **SY**stems) is a global market leader in version control and data management for automated production. The company has grown steadily since it was founded in 2007, with its North American headquarters located in Grand Rapids, MI and its global headquarters located in Landau, Germany.

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