



Mann + Hummel versiondog Case Study

Making Data Backups and Version Control Easier for Maintenance Staff

“Documentation is key” is the last piece of advice that production line suppliers usually give their customers. And yet, the advice is often quickly forgotten despite the best intentions. At Mann + Hummel, however, staff have truly taken to this mantra by using versiondog.

At the company’s factory in Marklkofen, Germany, version control and data management software has been in use for over 16 years now. They were one of the first users of versiondog.

Marklkofen is the branch of the Mann + Hummel group that makes filters for all automobile fluids except water. With a production area spanning 200,000 square meters, Marklkofen is the company’s largest facility. It plays a leading role in all aspects of production, from implementing new machines to standardizing production processes.

Why did Mann + Hummel need a version control system?

Mann + Hummel invests a considerable amount into new machines, robots, and peripheral devices every year.

They also have a strong emphasis on minimizing downtime and maximizing availability, with production lines running from Monday morning through Saturday on a three-shift system.

In order to make production run smoothly, almost every part of the production process is networked. All machines are connected to an MES system, so that they can be fully monitored and all errors can be recorded.

If a new machine is added, it is allocated a new IP address, a network cable is connected, and the communications module is installed. The machine can then run on the network.

Maintenance ports are also created so that a maintenance worker or external programmer can log in to the versiondog data management system and make programming changes to the production line.

This means remote maintenance can also be controlled by versiondog, which helps to ensure that the most recent version is always used.

How does versiondog help increase efficiency through automatic data backups?

The number of daily backups alone shows just how important data backups are to the company. Of over 1,100 backups, around 600 are carried out daily, with a further 300 executed on a weekly basis. For each one, the seven most recent uploads are saved. These saved versions also include complete lists of all current parameters. This ensures that the most recent software version is always running on every single component in the network. As a result, maintenance work is not only easier, but also takes less time. It's no longer necessary to search for the "correct" software version.

For Klaus Wanninger, Head of Electrical Maintenance at the Marklkofen Mann + Hummel location, this represents a considerable improvement.

"Repair times are now much shorter, as the system can be restored much more quickly following downtime," he explains.

"At Mann + Hummel, there have also been times when maintenance workers have had to search extensively for the latest software. And sometimes there were no backups at all. The fast disaster recovery provided by the version control and data management system versiondog is extremely important to our day-to-day work."

How does versiondog help Mann + Hummel with version control?

With machine parameters changed and improvements made on a daily basis, it is particularly important that the latest version be accessible at any time.

There are some parameters, however, that cannot be changed under any circumstances. Because versiondog allows users to limit access to specific parameters, certain sources of error can be eliminated completely.

Mann + Hummel uses Siemens systems for 95% of their components. Components like IPCs and PLCs are standardized and many of them are available, however, they are not pre-configured. If a component has to be replaced due to a faulty CPU, for example, then the most recent image simply has to be dragged from the versiondog server onto the computer. All maintenance staff are authorized to make this sort of change. Every time they do, they must provide authorization so that it is possible to track who changed what, when, where, and why.

The versiondog change management system requires users to record a reason for change in writing directly into versiondog. With this small effort, maintenance staff can avoid having to manually update excel tables or documents, and can save significant time during disaster recovery."

How does versiondog help Mann + Hummel with version control?

The maintenance staff work proactively and follow a strict schedule. "This leaves plenty of room for more event-driven tasks," says Wanninger.

When asked about the benefits of versiondog, Wanninger has many stories to tell of how much time used to be spent looking for the correct version of PLC software.

To reap the time-saving rewards, the maintenance team simply needs to structure the production network, assign permissions, and create user groups in versiondog.

What is it like to be an AUVESY customer?

“We regularly come up with new requests or suggestions,” Wanninger says. “After all, the world of automation is always changing.” AUVESY takes these requests seriously and incorporates customer feedback into new versions.

One addition is the WebClient, which allows users to access various report functions (like versiondog eventlog or PLC status) via their normal browser.

Another addition was the new versiondog Factory Floor Status Add-On, which is now also in use in Marklkofen. “We now have more accurate information for our spare parts inventory,” explains Wanninger. With this Add-On, it is immediately clear which components are installed and where they are located, so it is not necessary to keep a disproportionate number of PLCs in stock.

Factory Floor Status also lists all current firmware versions, so it is easy to check whether an error was caused by outdated firmware or whether an update is needed.

How easy is versiondog to learn?

At Mann + Hummel, versiondog has now become such an important tool that even the trainees now use it. “They learn how to use versiondog during their training so they are ready to go as soon as they are finished,” says Wanninger.

The Bottom Line: a versiondog Review from Mann + Hummel

Wanniger explains that “In most cases, companies can see the potential benefits of the software after just a few minutes.” For Mann + Hummel, the length of time that they’ve used versiondog makes it clear how much the data management system has worked for their company. It’s become a maintenance standard, one that works and that everyone is happy to follow.

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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