

Press release

Benetton consolidates servers to optimize the Information System

Olimpias – Benetton group - moves 10 plant IT assets into one iSeries

Milan – Oct 4, 2005 Olimpias spa, the manufacturing organisation of the Benetton group, has completed the consolidation of 10 servers designed to optimize the IT infrastructure by leveraging existing skills and resources and standardizing applications and data.

Today the Benetton Group is present in 120 countries around the world. Its core business is clothing: a group with a strong Italian character whose style, design expertise and passion are clearly seen in its brands: the casual *United Colors of Benetton*, more fashion oriented *Sisley*, *Playlife* leisurewear and *Killer Loop* streetwear. The Group produces around 110 million garments every year. The manufacturing activity of the group is performed by Olimpias spa, fully owned by the Benetton group.

Olimpias spa operates with 12 plants in Italy, with a turnover of more than 300 millions Euro and 2000 employees. Olimpias most important customer is Benetton; however 30% of the output is sold to companies outside the group: a clear proof of the production quality and of the level of customer care. Olimpias organisation structure to reach these targets is complete: Product design, Product engineering, Marketing and Sales. The production can be marketed at any level of the Bill-of-Material and of the production cycle: yarn, greige fabric or finished fabric.

In fact Olimpias handles all production steps from yarn to finished fabric: yarns, weaved and knitted fabrics, printed fabrics, as well as dyeing and washing operations.

The company's headquarter is in Ponzano Veneto (Treviso – Italy). The HQ building was completed recently, with a design taking care of efficiency and beauty, in line with the company's style: the new building was awarded with an architecture prize for its matching the needs of an intense work activity with the quietness of the Venetian landscape.

Mario Pillon, Olimpias' CIO, gives his view of the consolidation project.

Q: What's the primary goal of your project with Datatex.

A: The deployment of the Datatex solution in 12 Olimpias plants drove significant benefit to our company: enhanced efficiency, measured by the inventories levels, and reduced time-to-market. Moreover the Datatex solution was the tool to align to a single organization model the 12 plants previously working with different structure.

However our group was not satisfied with the reached level of standardization and information sharing. Therefore we launched this project to gather together all resources and to integrate the data. The project was feasible because every plant was using the same information system functions, in spite of different manufacturing activity.

Q: What are the main phases of your project?

A: The project goal is to concentrate physically and logically all the production supporting applications. The target is a unique information system providing services to all the plants, fully fitting the specific requirements of every manufacturing unit and guaranteeing a correct interface with the departmental applications.

The first phase was the migration of every plant Information system to the iSeries installed in Ponzano Veneto. Of course it was not a simple removal. We took advantage of this activity to enhance the level of use of the Datatex solution in all those plants that had implemented a subset of the available functions.

The second phase is focused to the “logical” consolidation of the Information System. Just a sample to explain what I mean: we will have a single BOM, used by the Olimpias’ plants producing yarns and by those manufacturing fabric. Therefore the article code of the yarn has no need to be changed when it is delivered to the plant using it.

Q: Can I say that Olimpias is viewed as a single integrated plant?

A: Yes. But in order to understand the project size and complexity is useful to remember that the project concerns companies acquired along the years, located in 10 different places, each of them with a significant use of third parties manufacturing operations. The starting point was 10 Datatex solutions installed in 10 different locations to support a total of 330 workstations.

Q: Usually, for a complex project, the hottest item is the respect of the time budget. What about you?

A: Olimpias management was strongly committed to the project and gave to it the highest priority. Therefore the plant managers forgot the fear of “loosing” their own Information System and were involved by the top management to evaluate and reach the big benefits for the whole group.

From the operational point of view we created a team with Olimpias system engineers and a Datatex project leader: the pace was the consolidation of a plant information system every 3 months.

Q: Any main direction or idea to make the project feasible?

A: First of all we worked to fit the specific requirements of each plant. We are becoming a “virtual” single vertical plant without imposing changes to the structure and guaranteeing the application functions already implemented by each plant. Moreover the project preliminary phase was the creation of analysis standard and of implementation and development standards. These tools shortened the implementation time and made uniform and consistent the work of whole group.

<http://www.olimpias.it/eng/home.htm>

Olimpias spa is a flexible and reliable production organisation that blends handicraft product quality with technological research development. It consists of twelve companies with an immense know-how, experience and production facilities. In summary: Two thousand people transforming raw materials into fabrics. Or rather, twenty million kilos of wool and cotton in the fifty million metres of finished fabric. Longer than a non-stop flight around the world, without any stopovers or delays: fast, safe and very strong.

<http://www.datatex.com/>

Datatex is the world’s leader in ERP solutions for the textile and apparel industry, with over 350 satisfied customers in 35 countries around the world. The datatex ERP for textile is a suite of modules divided into the various functional areas of management such as sales, inventory control, manufacturing, planning, costing and quality management. The Datatex software for textile and apparel is totally adaptable to small and very large companies, producing any part of the supply chain from fiber to garment. Due to its extremely high degree of flexibility, the datatex solution can be set up to serve most any company in the industry with minimum modification.

The contact person for the PR is

Giovanni Fantone datatex Marketing communications

Giovanni_fantone@datatex.it tel. +39 02 66738223