



The road to standardization

How Bilthoven Biologicals used the modernizing of their IT infrastructure to transform their labeling process

Case Study

Industry: Pharmaceutical

Solution: NiceLabel LMS Enterprise

Printers: 25

Challenges:

- Risk of noncompliance
- Manual data entry
- Manual quality control
- Unplanned downtime
- Lack of integration to SAP S/4HANA system
- Many disconnected labeling systems
- Heavy support burden

Solutions:

- Single centralized solution
- Document management system for labeling
- Integration system (for SAP S/4HANA)

Results:

- Increased efficiency
- Cost reduction
- Less unplanned downtime
- Template reduction
- Simplified IT support
- Centralized label purchasing
- Shift to Just In Time Inventory system

Bilthoven Biologicals BV (BBio) is a pharmaceutical company based in the Netherlands. It is their ambition to protect the world's infant population with affordable vaccines. As a part of an overall project to modernize their IT infrastructure, BBio seized the opportunity to implement a label management system and standardize their label production process.

Background

BBio is in the process of modernizing and standardizing their IT infrastructure. They were implementing a new SAP S/4HANA system, and they were looking for a label management system that could integrate label printing with their master data. BBio's label production process involves printing paper labels for WIP, product ID, box, pallet and shipping. They also print synthetic labels for samples that are stored in fridges etc. They use about 25 printers from two manufacturers, and the label printing is largely handled from one facility in the Netherlands.

Challenges

Fragmented labeling landscape impacts productivity

As is often the case with pharmaceutical manufacturers, BBio had a wide variety of solutions for printing labels from different vendors, as well as custom-made Visual Basic solutions. The large number of disparate, disconnected systems placed a significant burden on the IT department, who struggled to support so many systems. The lack of support was a potential high risk for unplanned downtime, which in turn could have a costly impact on production.

Paper-based processes increase errors

Label maintenance was also a challenge. Since BBio had no integration with their master data, maintaining labels was largely a manual process, which required a quality inspection person to check the labels that were produced. The lack of an automated quality management system made it

difficult for the company to comply with regulatory requirements for all of their labels. Paper-based processes increased the likelihood of user error and meant that implementing label change requests and performing quality assurance activities required a great deal of time and resources.

De-centralized production leads to lack of consistency

"We were in a situation where we no longer had an overview of all of the templates and label systems we were using", relates Martijn Huijbreghs, IT Application Manager with BBio. "Label design and production were spread out over a number of employees, so we lacked consistency in our label templates. In order for us to comply with regulatory requirements and to improve operational efficiency, we knew we needed a standardized labeling solution."

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Martijn Huijbreghs, IT Application Manager, BBio



Solutions



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Martijn Huijbreghs, IT Application Manager, BBio

The right product for a highly-regulated company

BBio was familiar with NiceLabel, as they had used a version of its labeling software for printing labels from their Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). "When it comes to label software, there aren't many vendors that offer a complete package that suits the needs of a highly regulated company like BBio. After we researched what was available on the market, we saw that NiceLabel's software had evolved into a mature label management system that fit snugly into the controlled environment of a highly regulated company," states Huijbreghs.

BBio implemented NiceLabel to centralize and standardize their label production. They use NiceLabel's Document Management System (DMS) to control and track their labeling. As opposed to having several people responsible for designing labels, BBio now has one employee responsible for label design, thus simplifying their operations. They now have complete integration with the master data in their SAP S/4HANA system, and they have also integrated with their MES, Pharmsuite, to print WIP and product ID labels. Integrating NiceLabel with their SAP S/4HANA system also gave them a unique opportunity to validate all of their GMP master data.

Standardization reduces cost and increases efficiency

Implementing a standardized label management system has made life easier for BBio's IT department. Instead of struggling to support a wide number of different systems, the IT department only has to focus on one system. This means less unplanned downtime, as the IT department can quickly respond to any issues and readily address them. By centralizing label design with one employee, BBio enjoys improved label consistency. Now that label production is integrated with the MES and ERP systems' master data, quality assurance tasks are easier to perform, thus reducing the labor costs associated with using a quality person to check each shipment. BBio can meet regulatory requirements and they have control over their label production process.

Results

Efficiency gains extend beyond label printing

Now that BBio had a consistent label production process, and as a result, had significantly decreased the number of label variations needed, they were able to centralize label and label hardware purchasing. Prior to implementing NiceLabel, BBio had to purchase large amounts of blank media in a variety of sizes in order to support the vast number of label variants. They were forced to keep a large inventory of labels on hand, as they couldn't risk running out of a particular label and dealing with the unplanned production downtime that would result. Yet the greater the inventory, the larger the amount of cash tied up in that inventory, cash that could be used in other areas. After centralizing label purchasing, BBio has been able to reduce the variations of labels needed, the amount of label stock required and the number of suppliers used. By moving from keeping a large inventory to a Just In Time inventory system, they are able to free up cash reserves and operate in a more agile manner.

Standardization transforms procurement

According to Huijbreghs, this level of standardization has had a positive business impact. "The gain in template management is in itself a win. Having fewer templates and one designer guarantees less maintenance and a uniform label

design. But we gain even more by being able to standardize our label materials and even our printer hardware. This guarantees easy IT support, reduces material costs and ensures less downtime because you have everything in stock."

By implementing NiceLabel, BBio has not only transformed their label printing, but their sourcing and procurement processes as well. The center of excellence approach to label procurement and production ensures a consistent and efficient label production process.

The right long-term solution

Next steps for BBio include implementing a Test and Production environment, which will enable them to preview label changes before they are deployed into a live environment. They are also going to extend their labeling system from manufacturing to QC Labs using NiceLabel's web printing functionality.

BBio believes that NiceLabel gives them the platform they need, not only to address their current challenges, but also to be prepared for future growth. "The NiceLabel platform is a turnkey label management solution for Life Sciences", comments Huijbreghs. "It is the ideal long-term solution for our needs."

To learn more about NiceLabel's solutions for the pharmaceutical industry visit

www.nicelabel.com/pharma

NiceLabel[®]

About NiceLabel

NiceLabel is a leading global developer of label and marking productivity software solutions that help SME and large enterprises reduce complexity and mitigate risk while meeting compliance requirements and increasing productivity, quality and agility. NiceLabel's design, print and management solutions are modular, easily configurable and scalable so they enable best practice labeling processes to be implemented quickly. This provides significant ROI over the lifetime of their use. Through its headquarters in the Europe and global offices in Germany, USA, Singapore and China, NiceLabel serves and supports its clients around the world with technology at the forefront of market demand.

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