

IFS partners Polish utility to improved management structures, better budget control and greater efficiency

IFS provided the level of integration necessary to allow the management at the Laziska power generating plant in Poland to gain an instant overview of the status of the company, an essential feature for an expanding company in a growing market. IFS Applications™ handles all tasks from maintenance and production through ordering spare parts to delivery and reporting work done. Replacing the former paper documentation system without essentially changing work processes, the transition to the new system was extremely smooth even though many of the employees were unfamiliar with computers. The solution enables increased budgetary control, allowing the company to continue to grow and adapt to new market demands.



The problem

The Laziska Power Plant, the first IFS client in Poland, is one of the largest in Poland, with 6 generating units exceeding 1 GW of total power. It supplies 7% of the national electrical power demand, and provides the local market with 800 TJ of thermal power, burning 2.3 million tons of coal per year in the process. With over 1500 employees, the plant is currently undergoing modernization—by the end of 1999 the installed power is to reach 1.15 GW. In 1991 the company decided to use computerized management support tools.

The solution

To be acceptable, the system had to be integrated and adapted to the structure of the company. Furthermore, it had to operate with existing software and be flexible and easy to modify. As many of the prospective users had no previous experience of computers, the system was also required to be user-friendly and easy to operate. The final requirement was that it had to fit into the Polish environment and meet Polish regulations.

The only company that fulfilled these stringent selection criteria imposed by the power plant was IFS, which has local offices, including an R&D facility, in Poland.

Implementation

The installation of computer networks, hardware and start-up of the relational database was commenced in the fall of 1992. By working in close cooperation with the customer and using the knowledge that existed within the company, the implementation was swift and efficient, despite the need to train employees who were encountering computers for the first time.

Initially, the two most important solutions for continuous production (which is the way energy is produced) were implemented, IFS Maintenance™ and IFS Financials™.

IFS Maintenance™ was implemented in just six months, initially supporting one generating unit. It was then implemented in the remaining five plants, along with IFS/Inventory™ and IFS Financials™. Implementation was completed on schedule in December 1994. IFS Maintenance™ and IFS Financials™ were integrated company-wide in 1995.

The benefits

“From the moment the first system was implemented, work efficiency significantly increased and communication between different company services improved, as did the currency of the information about the status of the units. The terminals placed in workshops and rooms quickly became trusted and essential tools of the trade,” says the manager of unit 9, Krystian Macol.

The IFS Applications™ system used at the Laziska Power Plant is used for inventory management, maintenance management, manufacturing and distribution management, in addition to supporting administration and budgeting. The plant also uses a system that supports efficient fuel management for coal stocks. Utilizing an Oracle database system conforming to the Structural Query Language (SQL), IFS Applications™ permits significant flexibility in the system, including real-time production support.

The shift to IFS Applications™, completed in 1996, also freed employees from the cumbersome paper documentation system previously in use without significantly changing their work processes. In addition, company accounting is fully supported. The IFS Maintenance™ system allows on-line capture of costs, which, after transmission to the financial system and together with the operating costs, produces a total view of the company's financials. The budgeting functions in turn are used by all units of the company

to monitor the current production costs.

The information system at the plant has about 350 users, most of whom use the system that is most critical to continuous production facilities, IFS Maintenance™, which supports the maintenance services. The financial system has about 50 users. The short-term plans include the expansion of the information system with additional modules supporting document management and work scheduling.

Janusz Grudzinski, CFO: “Faced with a rapidly developing market economy, we have implemented many changes in both management and corporate structures. Such a dynamic business as ours requires swift access to up-to-date information and a good view of the current status of the company. At present this can be assured only by an efficiently operated information system.”



Software

IFS/Equipment™, IFS/Inventory™, IFS/Purchasing™, IFS/Work Order™, IFS/Preventive Maintenance™
Oracle 7.2.3. database

Hardware

Sun Ultra Enterprise 450 server with 4 Ultra SPARC-II processors and a 1 GB RAM bank.
Solaris 2.6 operating system.