

Product & Batch Traceability with Integrated Accounting National Food Ingredients selects Kernel Software®



National Food Ingredients

Ltd has for many years been the major supplier of ingredients and recipes to the meat and other food processing businesses. The company, which has ISO 9001:2000, started the planning process to introduce integrated product and batch traceability as far back as 2003, under the chairmanship of the financial director Peter Doyle, and Operations Manager Kem Lynch.

Regular in-house meetings were held to ensure that the new system would meet the needs of all functional areas, especially QC, manufacturing, stock control and accounts. Special visits were arranged to a number of companies overseas, to ascertain the full implications and to hear at first hand the practical difficulties that arose. Having established the

overall parameters of the system through the process of internal meetings and special visits, a consultant was engaged to formulate a document for issue to potential suppliers. This document set out the precise objectives of the proposed system. The key objective specified was the seamless integration of product / batch traceability with the accounting function.

Tenders were invited from a number of potential suppliers and software demonstrations were arranged. After much research and testing, the tender submitted by Kernel Software Ltd was accepted. The reasons were as follows:

- Product and Batch traceability facilities were seamlessly integrated with the accounting function.
- Flexibility – the system had in-built flexibility which ensured that special requirements could readily be incorporated.
- Experience-Kernel Software has many years experience in working with a variety of food companies.

The training and implementation extended over three phases:-

Phase 1: Since the project involved all departments within the company, it was agreed to systematically process the requirements of each individual department in turn, starting with Quality Control and progressing through the remainder. As the overall concept and implementation philosophy had been agreed through the process of inter-departmental meetings, this stage involved solving the 'nitty-gritty' issues - in particular the lay out and content of some screens and reports to meet very specific needs.

Phase 2: On completion of the above phase, a full test system was set up on the company server. This was used for in-house training and provided users with the facility to become familiar with the new software and to satisfy themselves that the system would meet their needs. Exploiting the flexibility of the system, a number of minor changes were implemented to provide for particular circumstances, thereby enabling more efficient processing and enhancing user friendliness. In retrospect, it provided an invaluable method to train individuals and give them confidence that the system would

meet their needs when 'live' operations commenced.

Phase 3: 'Live Operation'

The conversion to the new system was carried out in one day and all processing went 'live' the following day. Personnel from Kernel Software stayed on site for a further two days to ensure all issues and questions, that arose, were quickly resolved.

Subsequent to the successful implementation of the project, it was decided also to install Kernel Software® in an associate company **Blakes Ingredients.**

Kem Lynch, Operations Manager, National Food Ingredients Ltd is very enthusiastic about the new system. "Prior to its implementation, we felt vulnerable in the event of a product recall, as it would have involved substantial searching through manual records with the possibility of missing some vital information. Now it is possible to key in a stock code and a batch number and instantly have a report showing all receipts from suppliers, all usages in recipe manufacture and all sales to customers for that combination.

This enables us to provide a better service to our customers and ensure that our focus on quality is maintained"

Peter Doyle, Financial Director, National Food Ingredients Ltd:

We in National are now pleased to have installed the new software, as we can give our customers the relevant assurances that we can successfully identify and recall products. The large product recall that occurred in Feb 2005 in the UK, due to a contaminated batch of chilli powder, is a wake up call for all food manufacturers to ensure they have similar capabilities.

Gerard O'Carroll, Managing Director, Kernel Software Ltd:

"At Kernel Software we work in close partnership with our clients, ensuring that the system provides a fully integrated solution. We are very happy to have installed the system in National Food Ingredients and delighted that the introduction went so smoothly"

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