

Hitachi Electronic Devices Co., Ltd

Address: 1289, Jiangxing east Road, Yundong District, Wujiang Economic Development Zone, Jiangsu Province

Established: 30th, October, 2002

Company Form: Foreign joint venture

Capital: 15M US\$

Shareholder: Hitachi group 51%
AUDIX 49%(Taiwan company)

Workers: 1700

Main product: CCFL (Cold Cathode Fluorescent Lamps)

Outer diameter: ϕ 2.4~4.0

Length 130~1,350mm



Situation prior to implementation

1. Frequent changes of orders

With the growing diversity of customers, a wide variety of orders are encountered, and it becomes difficult to create a production schedule made by hand to fit reality. To reflect the actual production results when scheduling, they connected to a production results management system. (Previously it took 26 hours to create a production schedule, but now it is reduced to 4 hours.)

2. Visualization of the production line

When making a scheduler by hand, a lot of time was consumed by changing the schedule to reflect production results, and it was hard to keep in step with actual progress of production lines.

3. Separation from depending on individual personnel

So far, due to making production plans by hand, they couldn't share know-how, so if the planner was away, no one could do the work. And production efficiency also differed according to the experience of shop floor workers.

4. Large amount of work in progress inventory

With increasing types of production, the set up time increasing, and shop floor not knowing the status of previous processes, it was difficult to prepare in advance, due to low production efficiency, so work in progress stocks increased.

Troubled by problems above, production scheduler Asprova was introduced by Hitachi Displays Japan, who is using Asprova and achieving good results.

Implementation effects

1. Dramatically faster processing speed of production scheduling.

About 100,000 jobs (number of jobs = number of lots x number of processes) can be scheduled in 1.5 minutes.

2. Able to deal with rush orders

Due to the high-speed of the scheduling, became able to quote due dates for rush orders immediately.

3. Visual display of progress by Gantt charts

Through tracking the real time progress of production lines by Gantt chart, users are able to find out problems immediately.

Ongoing issues

1. Only the pre-process is scheduled by Asprova, the full process is not involved.

2. The entire process of automatic scheduling, coordination and after-process scheduling still takes about four hours.

3. Due to processes changing and reworking needed, it's difficult to set up master data to model the after-process.



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Contact

Asprova Software Technology CO.,LTD.
Address : Zhongshan West Road, Xuhui
District, Shanghai, China Zhao Feng Universe
Building No. 1800 B, 5th Floor
TEL: 0086-21-6440-1023
FAX: 0086-21-6440-1359
E-mail: info@asprova.cn
Home Page : <http://www.asprova.cn>

Future challenges

1. Expand Asprova to all production process
To eliminate Bottleneck process, we implemented Asprova in the first process of production. Next, we are going to expand this to apply to all processes, it will be necessary to synchronize the overall schedule.
2. Rescheduling according to production results
The data collection system implemented at the same time as production scheduler is not running well. There are problems both with the system itself and its usage. While dealing with these problems, it's necessary to rescheduling according production results.
3. Daily operation
About the initial goal, to eliminate dependence on personal experience, we haven't completely achieved computerized scheduling. It's currently necessary to keep an instruction manual and update it for system maintenance and usage rules.

Comments from Asprova

Our product is appreciated by many customers in Japan. With many Japanese manufacturing industries expanding into China, our system is often used overseas. Even with factories producing the same product, factory conditions in China and Japan are different. When implementing systems like this, the adequate preparation and support of Japan, and organization in China are very important. The existence of a development/system integration company in charge of the system to provide local support is also important. In addition, in China people in charge of information systems change jobs more often than in Japan. Thus, even if a computer system is implemented, in order to continue ongoing operations, is necessary to make good usage instruction manuals.

Customer comments

Because we have no experience in implementing a production scheduler, we requested support and guidance from Asprova Japan headquarters and their local partners. For users, the initial system kick-off is just the beginning of using the scheduler. We feel we have now come about halfway towards our ideal situation. We will continue improving and maintaining the system with support from our implementation partners, and from the software maker.