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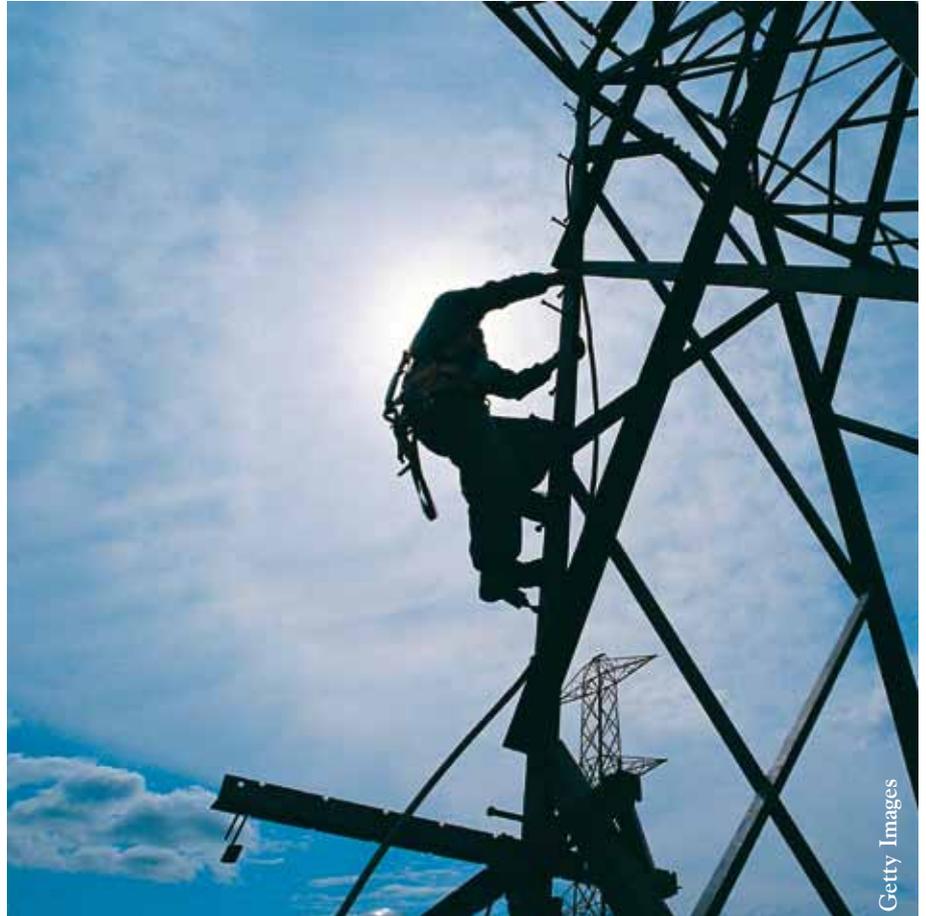
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Getty Images

Workforce management: Qualicision®-based optimisation

Planned maintenance and fault clearance

The efficient operation of widely distributed infrastructures such as energy supply networks is a demanding task of key economic importance. During planned measures, work must be performed on the network infrastructure that conserves its value, guarantees security of supply or optimises its structure. For example, the scheduling of maintenance, construction and fault clearance including fault receipt and processing is a continual optimisation process. It is crucial, as fault clearance and maintenance of supply networks is a resource-intensive task and makes up a relevant proportion of the costs of a network operator.

Within the operation of planned measures, there are opportunities for increasing efficiency in the management of personnel resources in conjunction with

other operating resources, i.e. there is a general increase in efficiency in the management of the workforce.

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News ticker

+++ PSI acquires more new customers in the steel industry in Brazil – Vallourec & Sumitomo Tubos do Brasil opt for PSI*metals*
 +++ PSI subsidiary inControl Tech implements communication project for Malaysian Railways
 +++ PSI implements new warehouse management system for Görtz – supplier of shoes and accessories optimises business processes with PSI*wms*
 +++ PSI receives order from ZUFALL logistics group for software migration – new version of the warehouse management system optimises business processes
 +++ PSI receives follow-up order from Austrian Teich AG – PSI*metals* automates production processes in new foil rolling mill II
 +++ PSI Logistics offers freight cost check-up – transparency in the cost structure leads to cash benefits in the short term
 +++ PSI supplies software solution for the new Berlin Brandenburg International BBI Airport – PSI*airport* for controlling the baggage transport and sorting system
 +++

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Editorial



Dear readers,

Qualicision® technology enables the implementation of software systems for intelligent decision-making support and process optimisation across industry sectors, and for more efficient handling of production processes and any other business processes. The more complex the business processes, the more it comes down to the appropriate identification and handling of conflicting goals – a speciality of Qualicision, which provides a generally applicable methodology for this. While the optimisation goals in the processes are generally dif-

ferent, goal conflicts can be handled in a generally applicable way with Qualicision, in a manner of speaking.

The range of applications is wide-ranging. We previously reported on Qualicision-based sequencing at BMW and several other car brands such as Volkswagen, Audi and Volvo [1/2009]. The recently commissioned optimal management of depots for buses and trams was the first use of Qualicision in the PSI Group.

In this edition, you will read about two new applications. The editorial article describes the integration of Qualicision into the workforce management tool PSIcommand, and highlights the benefit to the customer when operating, maintaining and rectifying complex infrastructures. The second application is as optimisation software for the fashion label Ulla Popken, which sells its fashion range in over 300 branches by mail order and online. The Qualicision solution is used to calculate demand-based stock transfer between branches and ensures an optimum balance between demand and stock levels in the branches. Both applications are very different at first glance. Yet they are similar: both are based on the same Qualicision core that identifies and handles conflicting goals in the processes.

Whether the automotive industry or the distribution of a fashion label, whether bus depots or the maintenance of infrastructure networks, goal conflicts are resolved: after all, optimisation is optimisation. For this reason, Qualicision solutions will continue to expand the PSI product portfolio for production, energy and infrastructure management with intelligent optimisation functionalities in the future. Perhaps you will also become Qualicision users soon. And I would be delighted if that were the case.

Yours faithfully,
 Dr. Rudolf Felix

Managing Director
 F/L/S Fuzzy Logik Systeme GmbH

► *Continued from page 1*

Efficient workforce management

The coordination cost of preparing and scheduling the appropriate resources for the work assignments is known to be high. For this reason, efficient workforce management must master all scheduled and operative processes despite the complexity of the task. When selecting the resources, highly diverse optimisation aspects, restrictions and correlations, e.g.: network topology, system specifics, technical specifications to be followed, weather conditions, consumer wishes, fault incidents, the degree to which employees are equipped and their individual qualification profiles must be considered. A further increase in the complexity of the planning processes results from the fact that the influencing factors outlined are only partly foreseeable, i.e. the levels of difficulty and cost of the work to be processed are merely estimated and are not precisely known in many cases. On the other hand, appropriate workforce management generates significant potential for reducing costs. This results from appropriate coordination of the activities of the workforce and can take place on different levels. In the operation of planned maintenance measures and the fault clearance, efficiency can be increased in particular by reducing non-productive times. Non-productive times include travel times to work sites, setup times, documentation times or correcting incorrect routes which can occur in daily practice e.g. due to false informations. The complexity to be mastered in appropriate workforce management goes far beyond the aspect of pure travel time optimisation, which is often addressed solely. Due to the complexity of the operating tasks, the organisational conditions and the dependencies of different

activities in topologically correlated networks, integrated optimisation taking account of all factors is needed which extends far beyond pure travel time minimisation. Only in this way can workforce management do justice to the entire range of operating goals when operating the tasks of the workforce with the required efficiency.

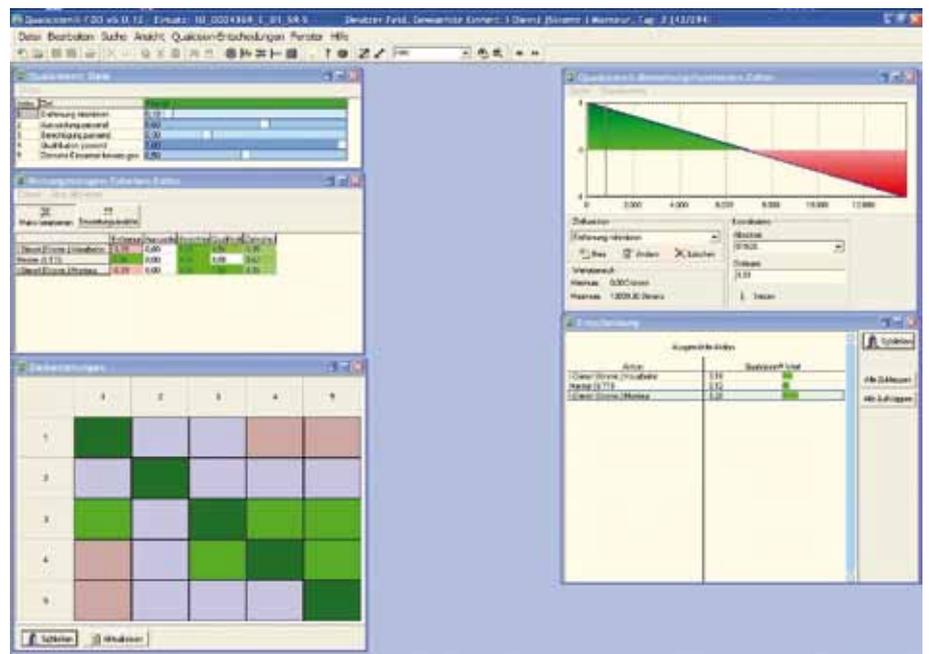
Complex nature of the target portfolio to be optimised

The extensive range of operating goals is often contradictory in nature and so has to be optimally weighed up against one another. For example, high utilisation of service employees must be ensured while simultaneously equalising the workload. The allocation of employees to work tasks according to qualification must be harmonised with adherence to deadlines and centralisation of tasks at neighbouring sites while simultaneously controlling the resulting travel times. As such operational goals must, in many cases, still be differentiated by area and place of residence of the workforce em-

ployees, resulting in a wide range of optimisation goals and consequently a high complexity of the optimisation process in workforce management.

Furthermore, it should be noted that individual optimisation goals have to be subdivided. For example, the equalisation of the workload of service employees must be differentiated according to the minimisation of the work load differences and the optimisation of the overall workload of the workforce. Work tasks should be disposed to service employees according to additional somewhat contradictory criteria, such as necessary qualification profiles, the reduction of outsourcing or striving for the maximum possible variety of activities.

Therefore, not all optimisation goals can be met simultaneously and equally well, as these contradict each other in full or part, as already outlined. It is therefore particularly a question of optimally balanced coordination of the optimisation goals when it comes to managing the workforce. However, optimisation criteria that are sensitive to each other must be handled in such a way that costly,



Qualicision® parameterisation: Process optimisation with due regard to relevant factors Source: F/L/S



PSIcommand: Work platform for maintenance, construction and fault clearance Source: PSI AG

manual interventions in the allocation of work assignments to service employees, an unwanted increase in non-productive times due to incorrect routes, or additional communication times to clarify facts are avoided, e.g. in order to break down previously encountered emotional rejection of assignments and thereby ease frustrations among participating employees.

The complexity of the optimisation process in workforce management described above can no longer be controlled manually if all efficiency potentials are to be utilised appropriately during optimisation. The person responsible for workforce management and in particular the planner and dispatcher therefore requires systematic software support.

PSIcommand extended to include Qualicision®-based workforce management optimisation

PSIcommand is the combined solution from PSI AG for operative maintenance, construction and fault clearance. Its configurable order model and flexible interfaces make it possible to master the complexity of the different processes and data flows. PSIcommand provides functions for coordination and support of all operating activities in fault clearance, maintenance and construction,

and for mobile service optimisation. The solution supports mobile employees with direct access to all important information, relieves the workload of central coordination offices using extended functions on mobile devices, and facilitates seamless documentation of assignment data even while on site. The comprehensive integration of all workstations involved, e.g. in district foreman's offices or production planning offices, technical integration into the business management and logistics processes via data exchange with other data processing systems, and seamless integration into the PSIcontrol network management system make PSIcommand a universal workforce management solution.

From responsive to plannable process

With PSIcommand Qualicision® Inside, the range of services of PSIcommand is extended to include multi-criteria optimisation functionality. The integrated Qualicision® module provides optimisation that can take any number of criteria into account. Qualicision is an application (see figure: Qualicision® parameterisation) for multi-criteria decision-making and optimisation which is capable of determining operating goals through intelligent registration and analysis of every starting situation, with

optimum assignment allocation of workforce units by weighing up goal and criteria conflicts. The Qualicision® optimisation module, which is fully integrated into PSIcommand, can be configured to suit customer requirements, so any optimisation goals and conditions can be addressed. The optimisation goals can be configured online by the user by specifying priorities. Using goal conflict analysis, goal conflicts can be calculated and displayed from accurate and up-to-date data. An online connection to the process data enables real-time optimisations, transforming workforce management from a responsive to a plannable process. Overall, both planning and operative workforce management becomes easier and more efficient. ☺

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User report: Optimised stock transfer

Qualicision®-Software at Ulla Popken

Under the slogan "Fashion that suits me", the Ulla Popken group of companies sells ladies' outerwear and presents its customers with changing collections each month. As a multi-channel company, the label sells its fashion range in over 300 branches, by mail order and online, with the help of selected European and international franchise partners, and also with shop-in-shop partners who are supplied with items in various sizes from the central warehouse.

The demand for goods from the seasonal range varies in different branches due to e.g. regional conditions. The demand gives rise to differently structured stocks of items and sizes in the individual branches. With the aim of harmonising the stocks in the branches with the corresponding demand structure, employees in the head office or regional sales directors at Ulla Popken regularly decide which branches send which item quantities to other branches and when.

Process description

Ulla Popken presents changing collections each month, so the branches

receive new goods on a monthly basis. Each branch has each item in stock (specified by model and colour) according to a sales forecast. The head office establishes a target and, where applicable, a minimum stock level per branch for each size of an item. The sales reports are used to determine the branches and items for which stock levels fall short of the target on an ongoing basis. As long as there is sufficient stock available in the central warehouse, further supplies can be obtained from there.

Otherwise branch transfers are generated. The branches with the highest sales potential are identified. These should then be subsequently supplied from the



Qualicision in the fashion world

branches that are above the target in the form of a transfer, so that the stocks in the individual branches are equalised after the transfer according to current requirements. Both the receiving and supplying branches must be determined accordingly from the breakdown of the stock situation in the branches and their sales figures.

Qualicision-based optimisation

The original manually scheduled transfer process has been replaced by Qualicision-based optimisation. The optimisation is now working automatically, in a multicriterial way, based on partly contradictory criteria and conditions. These include the attainment of target stock levels (possibly with a slight excess or shortage) and the supply or clearing out of entire size ranges. Apart from these fundamentally sales-



Decision software optimises the transfer of stock between warehouses

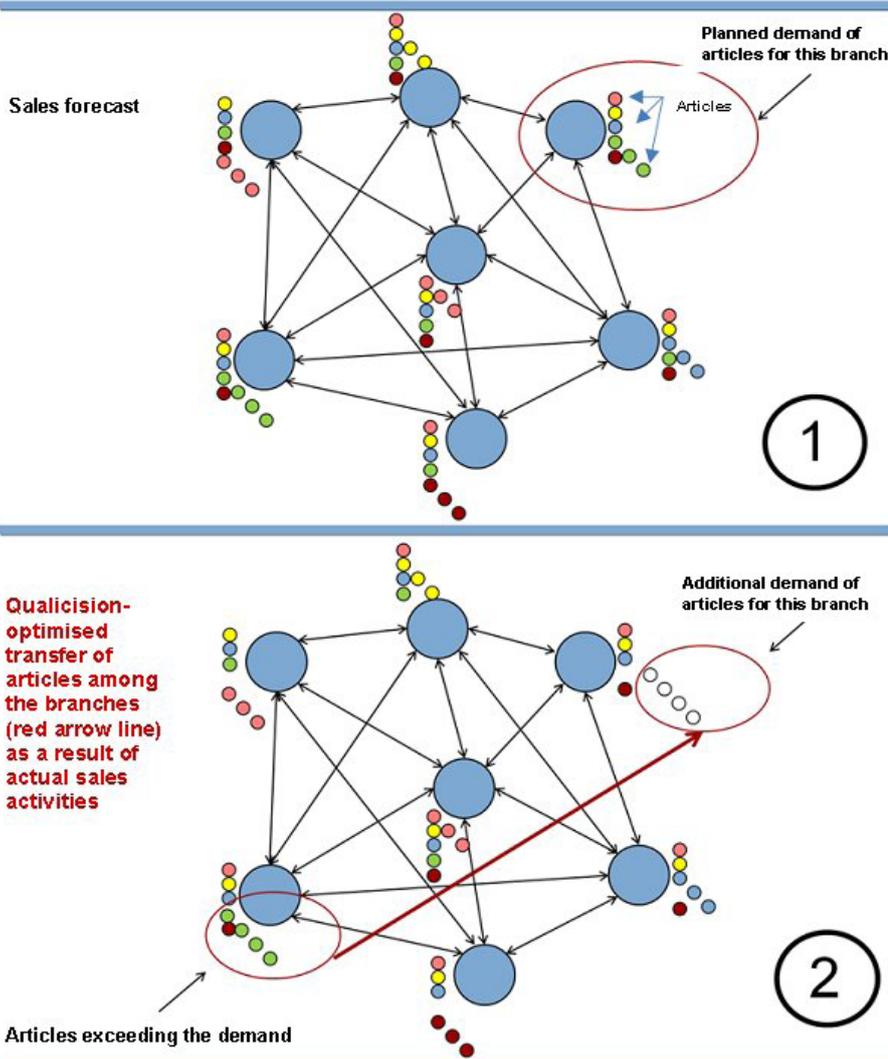
Qualicision-Software

Optimisation solutions

Companies are required to make millions of decisions on a daily basis. To varying degrees, these decisions are incorporated into systematised business processes, most of which did not function automatically up to now. The less formalised the company's business processes, the greater the need to systematise the decision-making process. Qualicision technology helps to automate this process, even when it comes to business processes with data sets that are prone to fluctuations and uncertainties.

Software systems created using Qualicision are generally known as decision support systems or optimisation systems. However, Qualicision systems can be configured by the user and adapted to the particular business process without the need for traditional software coding modifications. Software is used to model the decision-making processes before the solutions are integrated into the user's IT environment as well as for any modifications.

If the decisions reached using Qualicision are incorporated into iterative processes and relate to the identification of search directions in search domains, Qualicision-based search and optimisation procedures can then be developed. Unlike the conventional approach, which relies on simplified assumptions regarding the relationship between search and optimisation goals, this approach is particularly advantageous as it uses modelling based on the evaluation of data point quantities. Qualicision can be used in terms of digital image processing for business processes that monitor the flow of materials and control quality, for example. Here, the software is used to identify objects and to evaluate quality in production.



Optimised, requirement-oriented stock transfer between warehouses

Source: F/L/S

oriented goals, the shipping costs incurred in this way should be kept as low as possible and the organisational cost of packaging the goods kept to a minimum; this means that in addition to numerous other criteria, packages, quantities, size and fill level play a significant role.

The Qualicision-based optimisation weighs up the opposed criteria appropriately and calculates the required transfers dynamically on the basis of the current target stocks and sales figures. The individual criteria can be weighted by Ulla Popken so that a needs-based transfer can be requested at any time. This is performed in such a way that the individual

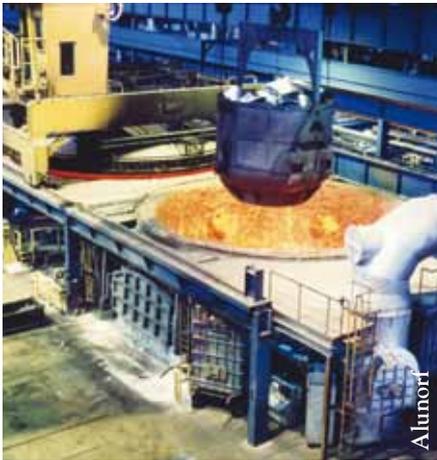
optimisation criteria are defined as KPIs (key performance indicators) to which Qualicision priorities can be allocated as optimisation parameters, if necessary.

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Products & solutions: Holistic production management solution for the metal industry

PSImetals 5 available now



In the last edition of production manager, we reported on the merging of the solutions from PSI BT, AIS and 4Production into PSImetals 5. We are happy to announce the market launch of PSImetals 5. The following article takes a look back at the successful 7-month integration process and describes the new, combined software solution for the metal industry.

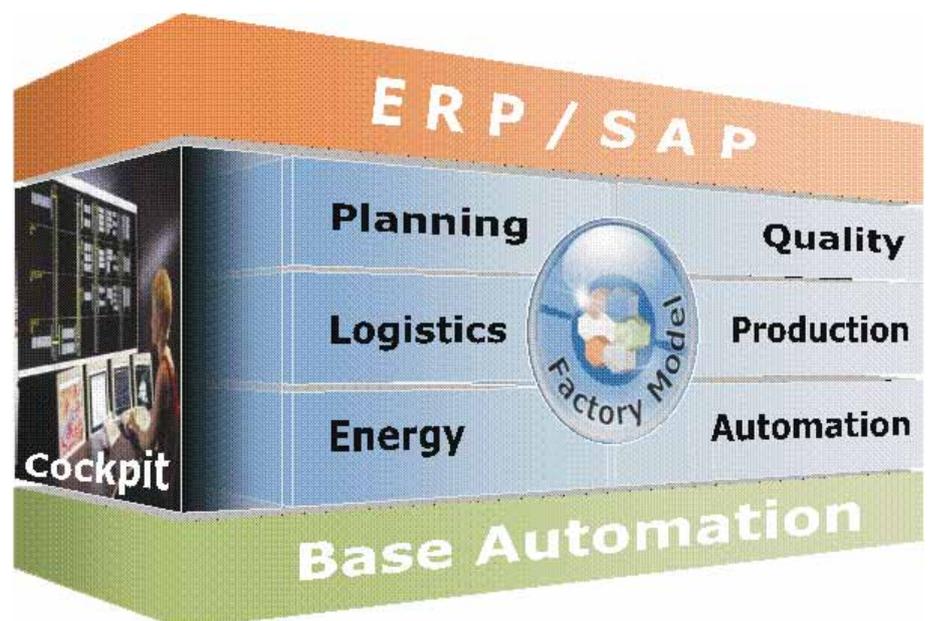
Immediately after the acquisition of AIS Advanced Information Systems by PSIBT last August, work began on amalgamating the AIS, PSI BT and 4Production solutions that had previously existed in parallel on the market into an integrated and holistic production management solution for the steel and non-ferrous industry. As previously reported, the aim of this integration process is to merge the mutually existing strengths into one comprehensive solution for our customers and bundle the company's many years of experience into one combined portfolio. Below we present the first, unified version of PSImetals 5.

The result of many years of experience

The aim of the task force established specifically for the development of PSImetals 5 was to achieve the targeted integration of strong, proven properties of the pre-

vious solutions for the metal industry. PSImetals 5 therefore combines the previous components of the AIS SteelPlanner with previous versions of PSImetals. PSImetals 5 consists of seven modules:

Automation, Energy, Logistics, Planning, Production, Quality and the comprehensive Cockpit for graphical representation of real-time information. The factory model as a database for all modules completes the standardised and comprehensive support for all end-to-end-processes of relevance to the metal industry. This makes PSImetals 5 the perfect integration platform between the ERP system and base automation.



PSImetals 5 at a glance — integrated modules and integrative solutions

Source: PSI Metals

5 ADVANTAGES OF PSImetals 5

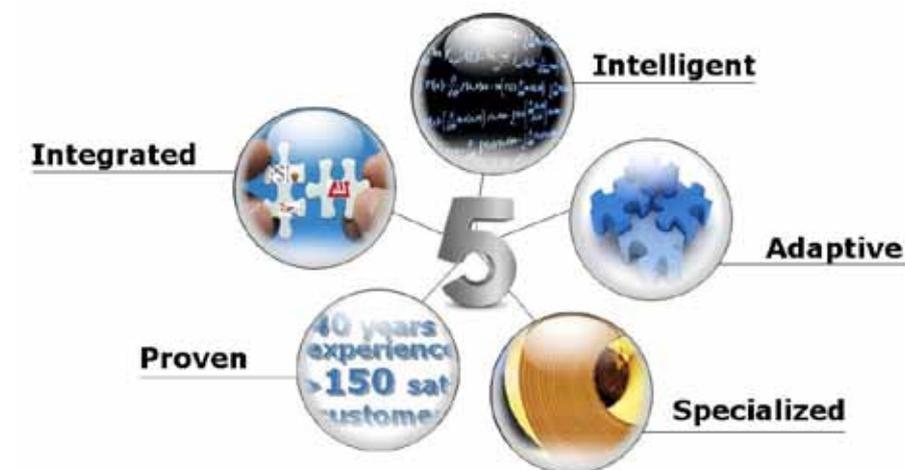
The advantages to users of bundling competences are varied. The following examples outline clear arguments for using the comprehensive solution PSImetals 5:

1 PLANNING Consistency at all levels

PSImetals 5 covers the complete range of planning horizons seamlessly – from sales planning through master planning and order scheduling, to sequencing, PSImetals 5 works on the basis of the factory model mentioned earlier. In addition, PSImetals is the perfect metals-specific addition to an ERP system, e.g. SAP. In the overall scheduling and material planning field, quantity-based order planning in SAP is refined using piece-based planning models. New, integrated optimisation algorithms and possibilities of what-if scenario development improve and complete the functionalities offered by PSImetals 5.

2 LOGISTICS Optimised flow of materials between planning & logistics

The proven system integrity of all modules is enhanced and functionally extended in PSImetals 5. Homogeneity at all levels of production management guarantees rapid decision-making processes and decisions based on the same level of information. The high level of system integrity along



PSImetals 5 combines the mutually existing strengths of AIS, 4Production and PSI BT into one comprehensive solution.

Source: PSI Metals

the order chain – from production planning to production execution through to logistics – ensures punctual order fulfilment.

3 INTEGRATION Responsive processes thanks to integrated systems

The use of PSImetals 5 to optimise the flow of materials with regard to storage and transport contributes significantly to the creation of an efficient production process. PSImetals optimally supports the integration of planning and material scheduling, and gives the operator a competitive advantage in the highly customer-oriented market. The integration of planning functions and warehouse and transport control using the virtual factory model permits anticipatory transport planning with knowledge of the planned production processes for the material. The generation of transport orders is supported by mathematical optimisation procedures which can achieve a significant reduction in the number

of transports and stock movements required. Integrated systems with radar and laser technology also permit virtually automatic tracking of transport orders and precise determination of the location of the material. Reduced costs, an increase in capacity utilisation and productivity, and improvements in quality assurance are the positive consequences.

4 QUALITY Comprehensive quality management

The main aim of PSImetals is impressive – ensuring the continual improvement process. With the comprehensive quality management functions, the loop between technical order elaboration, technical production implementation, quality control, deviation management and fault effect analysis is closed at MES level and the zero-error strategy consistently supported. Add-ons, such as being able to track the fault genealogy throughout the entire production path, create innovative access points for users.

5 PRODUCTION

Optimisation in real time

PSI*metals* 5 offers varied optimisation possibilities, each specific to the individual requirements in the different production areas of the steel, aluminium and copper industry.

Example of a steel plant: The complex interactions in the field of secondary metallurgy create a high dynamic and highlight the need for flexibility in planning and production. The aim of delivering a heat with utmost accuracy – i.e. at the time requested in a narrow temperature range with the correct chemical analysis – to the continuous casting machine requires maximum precision and extremely detailed system knowledge. In order to contribute

to the optimisation of processes, PSI*metals* 5 includes a temperature model developed in cooperation with VDEh-Betriebsforschungsinstitut GmbH which takes into account all material additions and treatment steps in secondary metallurgy. The coupling of the temperature model with real-time scheduling of heats therefore permits extremely accurate production in secondary metallurgy.

Consistent progression along the path of success

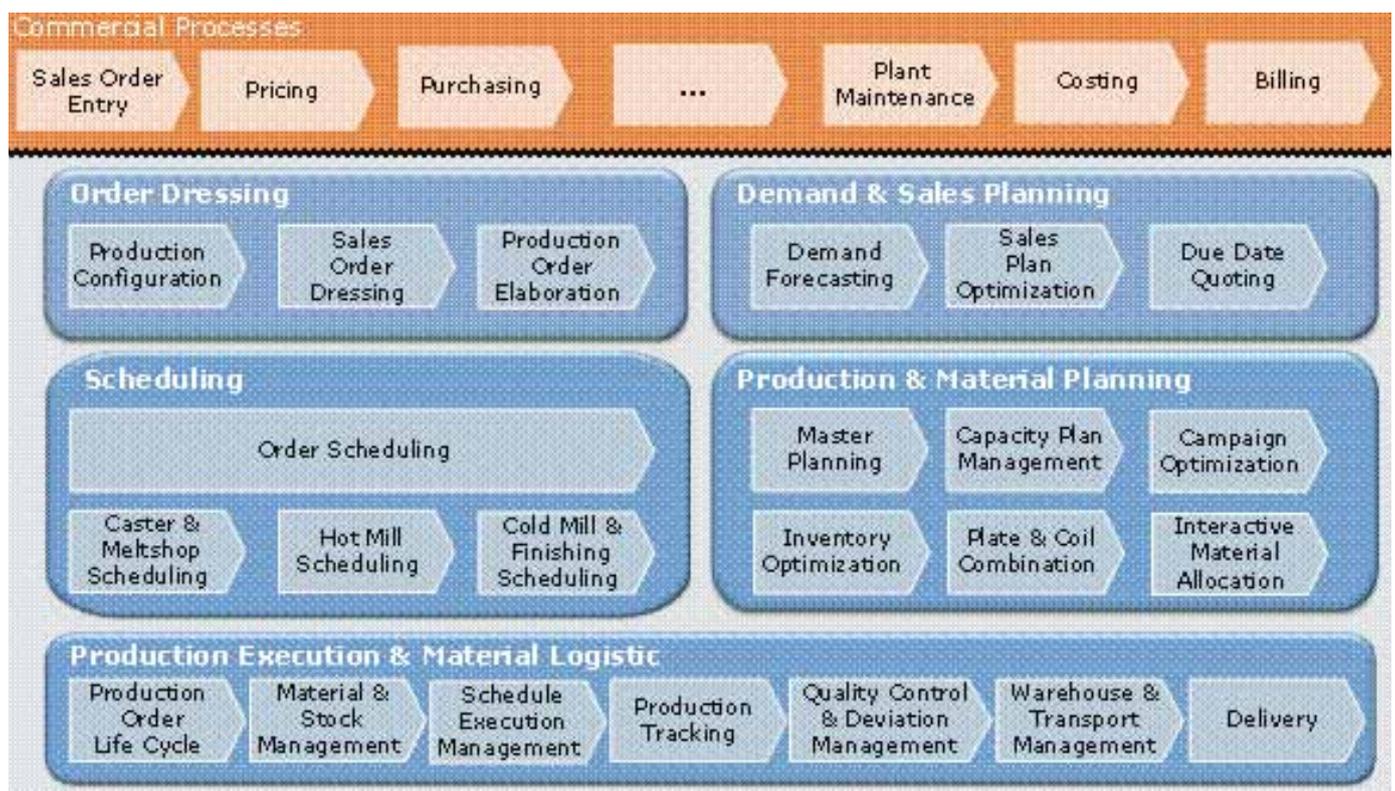
With the launch of PSI*metals* 5, the functional convergence of the products from AIS, 4Production and PSI BT is off to a good start. The second chapter of the success story is already being written: visual integration through the introduction of modern dialogue control, offering users a standardised user interface. ☉

AIS, 4Production & PSI BT become PSI Metals

In future, all solutions for the metal industry will be managed under the name of PSI Metals (see article p.14).

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The solution map from PSI*metals* 5 - Comprehensive support for relevant end-to-end processes

Source: PSI Metals

Products & solutions: Globalisation requirements from an IT perspective

Logistics software for global competition

With globalisation, the requirements of modern logistics software also increase. Those wishing to confront their competition with the necessary flexibility need to focus on more than functionality.

The globalisation of the economy is continuing. The increasingly globalised commodity flows present new challenges for producers and service providers. At the same time, increasing internationalisation causes competitive and cost pressure to increase in the domestic market, as do quality and service requirements in the new economic areas. Internationally operating companies must adapt themselves and their transport chains to the changed conditions. This also has significant consequences in the area of logistics software. Corresponding aspects should not be overlooked when investment is pending in the area of IT.

With a view to forward-looking functionalities, for example, multisite capability, freight cost simulation or the option of planning global value-added chains and networks, varying these in simulations and organising them optimally become strategic instruments in global competition. Thus with one freight cost simulation all service types and routes can be measured in detail and placed in relationships on the basis of diverse aspects. The multisite capability of logistical software systems offers planners the option of cross-site transfer of management and control of stocks and processes of different warehouses to different, possibly globally, locations.

However, an investment decision based on sustainability and future viability encompasses more than just the scope of



Globally organised commodity flows require forward-looking logistics software that offers solutions for the challenges of globalisation.

Source: PSI Logistics

service with logistics software. It takes further-reaching considerations into account. Flexibility, for example. Flexibility, the ability to integrate and resource efficiency are the fundamental trends in the development of forward-looking logistics IT systems. This is because on the one hand, the requirements users impose on their logistical business processes are becoming increasingly differentiated and specific. On the other, the formation of and cooperation in ever more complex, collaborative company networks require the seamless integration of software systems into a varied, heterogeneous and continually changing IT world.

Logistics software that exists prior to the requirements of globalisation cannot therefore be tailored solely to the specific processes of a user. It also offers the potential for flexibly integrat-

ing modified or new business processes or differing production conditions from other economic areas into its varying development levels. Similarly, this requires a modern software architecture, proven product liability of the software and the use of international standards. Only on this basis can software systems be used internationally and offer the availability of the national language in question as well as the user interfaces and high security standards adapted to the cultural area, for example.

Last but not least: even if online help systems are no longer an obstacle for modern IT systems – at least when it comes to planning, setting up, customising and commissioning the systems – users are dependent on globally reliable on-site support. If the software manufacturer is also present in the region with branches

and its own employees, numerous stumbling blocks are cleared away in advance not just in the event of problems, but also with regard to the maintenance and care of the systems.

These examples indicate that logistics software must now be capable of much more than pure process control. With vertical and horizontal integration, it undertakes the communication and networking of diverse processes – if necessary across company boundaries and continents. As a driver of innovation, PSI Logistics provides a comprehensive range of premium software with product character. With their functions, logistics software such as the warehouse management system *PSIwms*, the transportation management system *PSItrms* and the analysis and control software *PSIglobal* each fulfil the requirements of cross-site logistics processes. In addition, the systematic linking of systems gives rise to significant potential for cost reduction and leads to a further increase in efficiency. Update and release capabilities also underline the sustainability of the systems in supporting business processes. Furthermore, with around 200 qualified employees in the extremely powerful economic area of Asia alone, PSI ensures that users in the ambitious economic regions have a competent contact person on site for matters relating to logistics software. ☉

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Event: User Group for Warehouse Management

Successful first meeting

Constitutive meeting of the PSI Logistics User Group opens a dialogue. Exclusive forum for the exchange of specialist information between decision-makers, system administrators and developers sees high level of user involvement.



With the regular participation of users of the PSI Logistics Warehouse Management software, the constitutive meeting of the PSI Logistics User Group took place in Fulda at the end of April. In future, the user group should function as a cross-industry platform for the expert exchange of ideas between decision-makers, system administrators and developers. "This forum offers participants the option of introducing new stimuli and actively discussing the further development of *PSIwms*," explains Jürgen Baguhn, the PSI Logistics project manager responsible for the user group.

Employees of renowned companies – including service providers, producers and network providers – took the opportunity to shape the future organisation, membership conditions and content ori-

entations of the forum in the first meeting. Similarly, proposals were accepted for the future designation, as were details on the rotation and site of future events. As a result, the plenum will link around one meeting per year with the inspection of customer systems.

In the opening dialogue, initial questions and suggestions were also discussed and additional participant requirements formulated. These ranged from the implementation of logistical functions to the migration, release planning and connection options of third-party systems such as tariff systems through to issues of configurability using CSV files. In addition, the development status of the current *PSIwms* release 1.9.2 was outlined in a specialist presentation. "An interesting and professional plenum," according to Baguhn. "We can very clearly meet one of the customer's needs by setting up this forum. Following the results of the first meeting, I am convinced that the PSI Logistics User Group will establish itself as an expert workshop." ☉

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Interview: Oliver Schmidt regarding the online platform www.erp-demo.de

Breaking down language barriers

ERP, MES, BI, CRM, CTP, JiT, SaaS or Cloud Computing etc. The IT world speaks its own language. Often using abbreviations and English. As a result, comprehension of IT innovations and their benefits to companies often fall by the wayside. This is why PSIPENTA developed the online portal www.erp-demo.de. It explains company software in an entirely new, descriptive way. Oliver Schmidt, Head of Business Development at PSIPENTA, explains the new portal for the production manager.

Mr Schmidt, the online portal www.erp-demo.de has been available since 1 March. At first glance, it isn't clear that PSIPENTA is the creator. Why?

Schmidt: By opting for this style of presentation, which is anonymous at first glance, we want to portray the character of our new information portal, which is intended to provide interested visitors with information rather than primarily advertising a specific product.

That's unusual. Where did you come up with that idea?

Schmidt: The IT world mainly communicates in the form of anglicisms and acronyms. If you don't have some com-

mand of the language, it is very difficult to become well informed on the subject of enterprise resource planning (ERP), for example. So we saw it as a challenge to make the IT language intelligible for normal users and provide them with information – without advertising a specific product at the same time – which is feasible today with modern information technology.

How did you go about it?

Schmidt: Anyone interested can go to www.erp-demo.de and find a virtual factory, down to every minute detail. There's an accounting department, production planning, construction, production, a warehouse and shipping depart-

ment, i.e. all the departments found in a manufacturing company. You can look for your own workstation, and find information there in an understandable language without technical jargon. We think this is important in order to allow users to gain access.

So do I have to feel my way from workstation to workstation?

Schmidt: That's one option, of course. You can also take part in a guided tour for different industries. On the tour, all points that are important to the EDP landscape and support modern EDP systems are highlighted, such as service management or growing bills of material.

How detailed is this information?

Schmidt: At a lower level, the information is split three ways. First there's usually a customer statement. This isn't a matter of simply praising PSIPENTA: a customer explains why he uses a piece of software, for example for multiple-plant

management, how he has addressed the subject and what the software has done for him since its implementation.

We provide the second batch of information in the form of short screencasts, i.e. films showing how the subject area in question can be tackled using software. This means the first encounter with a guided user interface, where users do not have to select or click on specific fields themselves. So prior knowledge is not required here either.

The third piece of information is a description of the features of the suitable module from our software range, which of course can also be used to query comparison data with other providers.

What's different about this portal or what makes it unique in some way?

Schmidt: I don't know any approach that strives to translate IT language into a form appropriate for the SMEs. Animated images were only used to advertise specific products. This is not our main objective at all. We want to give those interested the ability to understand and define what they actually need and can use logically in their company.

Do users have to visit your portal with plenty of paper and a pen?

Schmidt: Of course not, this is IT after all. You can move around the virtual company interactively and save information that you want to follow up on a note pad, for example. At the end you then have an information list which you can print out or save as a file. This is a list with a table of contents and a breakdown containing all of the things that interest you most at the moment.

Do I have to register or log in to use your portal?

Schmidt: Naturally, it's important for us to know who's interested in our information, so we have provided a registration process once you reach a specific level of detail. Registration is also legally required to a certain extent, as we present short films including statements from our customers, for example. We just want to be on the safe side. However registration is completely free, non-binding, and the process only needs to be carried out once.

Who are the target groups for the portal?

Schmidt: We're addressing roughly three target groups: the classic interested parties who have to get to grips with the subject of software. The second group consists of our customers, to whom we want to offer training documents, a community and a link to our hotline on this portal by means of an authorisation concept. Information that previously had to be distributed using print media or cus-

tomers conferences can now be disseminated much more quickly.

The third key group is universities. In the past, we had to set up costly installations, later upgrade these to new releases and re-train the staff who then taught the content to students. With the portal, we have now made it possible for students to obtain information on relevant processes quickly and easily in simple modules. The webcasts provide an insight into the way the software implements the processes, using a practical example. 

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News: New product version PSImetals 5 becomes the first joint solution

PSI pools market activities for the metals industry under one roof

PSI will perform all market activities for metal production and metalworking under one name, PSI Metals, uniting PSI BT GmbH, AIS Advanced Information Systems GmbH & Co. KG and 4Production AG under one roof.

PSI Metals GmbH was therefore founded in early April by renaming PSI BT GmbH. The PSI Metals Group operates worldwide, offering a combined range of services optimised to meet the production management needs of the metals industry with its new product version PSImetals 5.

By acquiring leading providers of production management software – such as AIS Advanced Information Systems who focuses on supply chain planning and 4Production who specialises in the aluminium and copper industry – PSI has managed to increase the attractiveness of its service spectrum. The new



PSI Metals Group thus represents the world's largest provider of software solutions in this market segment.

After only six months, PSI is presenting the initial results of pooling market ac-

tivities in the form of a joint version of the product PSImetals 5, which combines the strengths of each of the former solutions of PSI BT, AIS and 4Production in one solution. From specialised methods of optimisation for specific requirements to seamlessly integrated planning, production and logistics processes, PSImetals 5 fulfils the most varied optimisation requirements for all steel, aluminium and copper production processes. 

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News: PSI Logistics supports junior staff

Logistics award for scientific theses

PSI Logistics GmbH supports the competition for junior academics in the logistics industry launched by Logistikinitiative Hamburg and the regional Federal Association of Logistics (Bundesvereinigung Logistik, BVL). Its aim is to encourage young people to take an interest in logistics and information technology.

The competition is aimed at students addressing logistics-relevant issues in their thesis who have worked on this subject in cooperation with a company.

The EUR 1500 prize fund is subsidised by the State Ministry for Economic and Labour Affairs in Hamburg and PSI Logistics GmbH. To remedy

the lack of skilled employees in the logistics sector, PSI Logistics supports young talent and initiated a firm partnership with Rahlstedt Secondary School in Hamburg at the end of 2009. "In a revitalised economic environment, the innovative capability of the logistics industry is a basis for future successes," explains Wolfgang

Albrecht, Managing Director of PSI Logistics. 

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PSI experiences market recovery

Increased Earnings

PSI Group has increased its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) in the first quarter of 2010 by 16 % to 2.8 million Euros and its earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) by 3 % to 1.8 million Euros. Consolidated earnings after interest and taxes dropped slightly to 1.2 million Euros, while consolidated sales rose by 21 % to 37.1 million Euros. Incoming orders were up 7 % compared to the same period last year at 45 million Euros, the order backlog dropped to 105 million Euros.

The number of Group employees as at 31.03.2010 increased to 1,398 as a result of acquisitions in the previous year and targeted new recruitments.

Over the past few months, PSI has observed a renewed increase in demand for energy market solutions and increasing efficiency in heavy industry. Management is expecting further growth drivers, especially in the Gulf region as well as Germany and Europe, as a result of creating European super grids and intelligent energy consumption control using smart grids.

PSI is confirming its annual targets for 2010 of 160 million Euros in sales and an operating result of 10 million Euros. 

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News: Welcome to our new websites

PSI unveils new Internet presence

The websites of the PSI group and PSI group subsidiaries were last radically overhauled five years ago, so it was high time for another reworking at a technical, functional and design level. On 1 March 2010, the new group website and the twelve websites of the group subsidiaries went online simultaneously.

The corporate design of PSI with the logo, colours and fonts were retained to ensure a consistent visual appearance. The websites of the group subsidiaries only differ from each other in terms of the colour scheme based on the primary colour of each business division: orange for energy management, blue for production management and green for infrastructure management. As a combined website, the group website refers in detail to the websites of each group subsidiary. The modular and flexible page layout has been expanded and adapted to the current standard resolution of 1024 pixels. The font size has been increased to improve legibility. The optimised navigation feature clearly shows users where they are in the page structure. Click paths have been shortened so that users

can jump directly to the sublevel of the main category using a dropdown menu. Cross-linking within the websites has been enhanced with a global section in the page footer to highlight related solutions within the group. 

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PSI **SCHEDULE**

06–10/06/2010 06.06.2010	Copper Conference / Hamburg Presentation "Copper production: material flow management in real time", Dr. Dirk Bernhard www.cu2010.gdmb.de	PSI BT
14–16/06/10 15/06 / 10.00am–1.00pm	17. Aachen ERP Days / Aachen Supplier conference as part of the ERP Days: "Comparison of company software in the virtual and real factory", Oliver Schmidt, Head of Business Development at PSIPENTA & Martin Pauli, IT Director at Wilhelm Schwarz Müller GmbH www.erp-tage.de/www.psipenta.de	PSIPENTA Stand 5

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