



Epicor Success Story

The Old Bushmills Distillery

Boosts continuous improvement initiatives with Epicor Informance EMI

Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Bushmills, County Antrim, Northern Ireland
- ▶ Industry: Manufacturer of Irish whiskey
- ▶ Web site: www.bushmills.com

Success Highlights

Challenges

- ▶ Bushmills was using traditional paper-based methods to monitor manufacturing performance. The need to eliminate time-consuming, error-prone manual intervention prompted Bushmills to search for an enterprise manufacturing intelligence (EMI) solution.

Solution

- ▶ Epicor® Informance® EMI

Benefits

- ▶ Grew overall equipment effectiveness (OEE) by 48%
- ▶ Reduced major stops 46% and minor stops by 38%
- ▶ Increased production output
- ▶ Boosted continuous improvement initiatives
- ▶ Decreased labor costs as a result of adjusted runtimes
- ▶ Improved quality management
- ▶ Cultivated an engaged workforce, from the top floor to the shop floor



Since way back, 1608 to be exact, King James I granted Sir Thomas Phillips—landowner and Governor of County Antrim Ireland—a license to distill. Thus, The Old Bushmills Distillery was born. Today, more than 400 years later, Bushmills is the oldest whiskey distillery in Ireland and produces top shelf brands that are enjoyed (responsibly) by whiskey aficionados around the world.

The Business Situation

Bushmills puts careful detail into every drop of its whiskey-making process—mashing, fermentation, distillation, maturation, blending, bottling—to ensure the highest quality. So you can imagine the close eye that is kept on the production process as well to keep things running smoothly on the distillery's shop floor.

Up until 2012, Bushmills was using traditional paper-based methods to monitor manufacturing performance. The need to eliminate time-consuming, error-prone manual intervention prompted Bushmills to search for an enterprise manufacturing intelligence (EMI) solution. Soon thereafter, automated information gathering and real-time visibility into plant-level data using a manufacturing intelligence system became their future.



The Solution

Bushmills chose the Epicor Informance EMI solution and Sage Clarity, a member of the Epicor Inspired Partner Network, as their services provider. Bushmills saw first-hand the power behind the system and was confident Epicor Informance would enable the same marked improvements for their manufacturing operations.

Epicor Informance monitors machines and analyzes production and performance data 24x7. The system collects data directly from equipment and operators on the shop floor. This real-time insight helps Bushmills pinpoint critical issues, reduce waste, and improve quality. With data collected as time goes on, it becomes easier to analyze chronic (repeating) issues with a wide variety of out-of-the-box reports and key performance indicators (KPIs). The business can take action to improve manufacturing performance.

Packaging Manager James Dysart leads a team of 16 and oversees the entire bottling operations at The Old Bushmills Distillery. Dysart explains that the top reasons they searched for an EMI solution was to keep up with other world-class manufacturers and to support their continuous improvement initiatives. In order to achieve this it was critical to have real-time visibility into their production lines:

“Prior to Epicor Informance operators manually recorded data, such as downtime, on spreadsheets at each of the production lines. Now with Epicor Informance the data collecting process is automated, plus we have a large screen TV stationed at each line, another television in the main packaging office which covers all three lines, as well as information captured on smartphone mobile devices so operators can monitor production performance at any given time, in real time.”

Epicor Informance enables everyone at Bushmills to get accurate real-time data instantly and on-the-fly, not minutes, hours, or shifts later. The entire operations and production teams work collaboratively to reduce downtime, and optimize equipment, capital, and worker resources, and drive performance gains with Epicor Informance.

Partnering for Success

Bushmills partnered with Sage Clarity, a leader in best-of-breed supply chain and manufacturing solutions, to implement Epicor Informance. Bushmills underwent the Clarity Implementation Methodology, a five-step process led by Sage Clarity consultants who have Lean Six Sigma® backgrounds, that helps drive rapid adoption of the technology and also accelerates plant improvement initiatives.

“Epicor Informance is a perfect solution for companies like Bushmills that embrace technology and see the value in how technology can help drive a continuous improvement agenda,” says John Oskin, CEO, Sage Clarity. “Bushmills has seen significant improvement in OEE since installation, one of the many triumphs they’ve achieved from their decision to implement a manufacturing intelligence solution.”

“The Clarity Implementation Methodology was very well-received by management and the leadership team,” says Dysart. “Everyone across the organization found the system to be extremely user-friendly, from the ease of operators tagging downtime to the simplicity of running reports and setting up dashboards. Sage Clarity did a great job training us on the system and educating us on the true value we could get out of it. They continue to be our technology partner today.”

“Six months after we implemented Epicor Informance, Sage Clarity came on site and took the data collected from our use of the system to compare and benchmark our performance against other world-class manufacturing sites. We looked at OEE, efficiency, quality, production costs, downtime and other manufacturing performance metrics to set up methods for improvements,” says Dysart.

In order to develop a baseline for manufacturing efficiency for best-in-class and laggard manufacturers, Epicor has completed numerous manufacturing benchmark studies for different industries. These studies are compiled with information from Epicor Informance manufacturing intelligence systems (including patented analytics), and IMPACT Advisory Services. The benchmark survey details the collected data, and includes insight and correlations to operational success of tactical and strategic actions.

This was an important step for Bushmills to uncover areas of weakness and drive continuous improvement programs.

Distilling Performance Improvements

Roy Simpson is the manufacturing excellence change agent coordinator at The Old Bushmills Distillery. In his role, Simpson supports the management of Epicor Informance and monitors all KPIs on the plant floor.

“We’ve found the Epicor Informance solution to be very effective and user-friendly. The system has enabled us to increase our production output by helping us find more capacity on our production lines. We can capture and analyze information a lot quicker to help reduce critical downtime issues like major and minor stops. In addition, we’ve been able to adjust our runtimes



which has resulted in decreased labor costs because it takes less time to produce product," says Simpson.

Bushmills utilizes the functional depth and breadth of the end-to-end manufacturing intelligence solution, including features and functionalities such as web based plant reporting, alerts and notifications, real-time scoreboards, Apple® iPad® and microsite applications, and financials.

Since installing Epicor Informance:

- ▶ OEE has climbed 48%,
- ▶ Major stops reduced by 46%, and
- ▶ Minor stops have dropped as well by 38%

"Because OEE has increased so significantly that in turn has improved our manufacturing performance across all of our production lines," says Simpson.

Forging a New Culture

Epicor Informance provides Bushmills with real-time insight for better production and business performance, but it's so much

more than that. Epicor Informance is a critical tool for strategic planning, and turning strategies into tactics for improvement. "Now that we have the right data we can get to the resolutions quicker," says Dysart.

Because decisions are based on accurate information and stakeholders can easily identify areas that need improvements, Bushmills has seen a positive correlation with employee engagement. "Having information at their fingertips in real-time allows employees to make informed decisions faster which has had a significant impact on cultivating a highly-engaged team on the shop floor and across the entire organization," says Dysart.

By leveraging technology to build and extend improvements across the production network, Bushmills experienced a dramatic and unexpected shift in culture.

About Epicor

Epicor Software Corporation drives business growth. We provide flexible, industry-specific software that is designed around the needs of our manufacturing, distribution, retail, and service industry customers. More than 40 years of experience with our customers' unique business processes and operational requirements is built into every solution—in the cloud, hosted, or on premises. With a deep understanding of your industry, Epicor solutions spur growth while managing complexity. The result is powerful solutions that free your resources so you can grow your business. For more information, [connect with Epicor](#) or visit www.epicor.com.



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