



versiondog comes for coffee

At the Nestlé plant in Mainz, Germany, a clear strategy for the use of versiondog versioning and data management software was developed before implementation; no more backing up to USB sticks; huge time savings thanks to versiondog

“Well before it went live, we had worked out a clear plan for exactly how we were going to use the new versiondog versioning and data management software from AUVESY,” says Michael Mrugalla, who works in process automation at the Mainz plant. “We also had to think about what backups really meant for us. With all our field devices, control programs, drive systems, programming languages, file formats and software applications, we needed to know precisely what we have to back up in case a breakdown (e.g. a power outage) stops production. Because the whole point of making a backup is to be able to recover data quickly and easily when something goes wrong and continue working as if nothing had happened. But that means more than simply restarting production, it also means we need to be able to pick up where we left off with our ongoing process maintenance and optimisation.”

It was particularly important to Nestlé that their backup strategy be built around a single continually active and universally applicable

solution. And they wanted it to maintain a centralised backup of all the data necessary for both recovery and further development for all devices and all related projects (i.e. every piece of hardware and software). And the programs actually running on controllers need to correspond precisely with the data on the server. If not, the reason must be easily identifiable and the valid version always available to be reloaded onto the device.

versiondog makes data management easy

“These days we take our straightforward data management process for granted, but it wasn’t always like this,” says Mrugalla, “A few years ago, the USB stick was our main tool. We had a whole collection of them. But four years ago, when we got AUVESY’s versiondog, we decided to use the software for both data management and versioning. This meant we were able to introduce standardised central data storage, a fully automatic backup system (including backup of desired values), version management with detailed change detection, easily comprehensible documentation for quality management, and, as a result of clear user management, optimal coordination between members of staff. And with versiondog, it works as well in practice as it did in the plan.”

Before versiondog, when something went wrong in automated production, finding the cause was a highly stressful job. One big reason for that was the amount of time that it took. The exact amount varied depending on the project concerned. But, as Mrugalla describes it, where program validation was required then anything between a day and a week could be lost. It was particularly important to find out who was the last person to have worked on a program. If that was known, then their programming device could be accessed and the problem fixed. But this was a difficult process and usually meant that full-efficiency production was significantly interrupted. And that was a very awkward situation for a plant as important as Nestlé in Mainz, because it is here that Nescafé is produced for export to around 40 countries. The factory also produces the co-coa drink Nesquik.

4,600 cups of Nescafé per second world-wide

Every year, 14,000 tonnes of various different kinds of Nescafé are dispatched from Mainz. For those who like statistics, it might be interesting to know that around the world 4,600 cups of instant Nescafé are enjoyed every second. In this plant, there are 380 people working around the clock to produce it, along with a range of other products. The production process is superbly automated. All the way from delivery of the coffee beans to packed and labelled jars of Nescafé. Each cog in this finely intermeshed machine plays a vital role. If just one ceases to function as it should, the problems that result affect the entire production. To prevent this happening, there are five workers in process automation who are responsible for plant control. Four years ago, they decided to start using versiondog. Their wide-ranging experience gained since then can be used to considerable advantage today.



The most recent version always identifiable and always available

Part of that experience is the knowledge that using versiondog means that the most recent software version of every single component in the process is always readily available. But not just that; versiondog is also able, if desired, to keep all changes and their annotations permanently in view. Particularly important is the certainty provided by the cleverly planned backup process. “We schedule an automatic backup of process control and visualisation every 24 hours. The network and communications setup is backed up about once a week,” says Mrugalla. The result is that data recovery, when necessary, is much quicker than before versiondog. Moreover, the development process that led to the current version and the results that were produced along the way can also be clearly followed. So it is easy to see which version worked best. This can then be accessed and reimplemented at any time. “The benefit of that – compared to the time before versiondog – is that we make up to 90% time-savings when we need to repair a process,” says Mrugalla. That is a huge increase in efficiency. This is a core forté of versiondog, and something of which all users of this software from AUVESY can take advantage.



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About AUVESY

AUVESY (AUtomated VErsioning SYStems) is the world's leading version control & data management system for automation. The company has grown steadily since it was founded in 2007 and it continues to go from strength to strength.

With a team of around 80 employees and 30 international sales partners, AUVESY looks after more than 700 customers from across the industrial spectrum and in more than 40 countries.

Over 900 versiondog software systems are currently in place helping customers to safeguard their data, simplify their data management and optimise their workflows.

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