

Autoneum

Autoneum Boosts Asian Production and Logistics Processes With Epicor iScala

Company Facts

Overview

- ▶ Location—Winterthur, Switzerland—with about 50 more locations in over 20 countries
- ▶ Industry—Tier 1 Automotive Manufacturing
- ▶ Website—www.autoneum.com

Autoneum is the global market and technology leader in acoustic and thermal management for vehicles. The company's customers include all leading automobile manufacturers in the automotive key markets of Europe, North America, South America, and Asia.

The company develops and manufactures lightweight and multifunctional components, modules and complete systems for interior and engine bays, as well as heatshields and underbody shields. With its innovative technologies for noise reduction and heat protection, Autoneum helps increase a vehicle's comfort and value. Its products also notably lower the weight of vehicles, which leads to improved fuel efficiency and reduced CO₂ emissions. In addition, Autoneum is the leading supplier of specialized measurement systems for automotive acoustics to evaluate the NVH performance of component and material properties.

Success Highlights

The Swiss-based company with headquarters in Winterthur, Switzerland employs more than 11,000 people in nearly 50 locations across more than 20 countries.

Challenges

- ▶ Lacked efficiencies through standardised processes within the region
- ▶ Needed to comply with customer requirements
- ▶ Required a strategic technology partner to support business operations
- ▶ Could not ensure continuously high standards of production and logistics

High standards

Working with a large number of suppliers and car manufacturers around the world, Autoneum needs to ensure high standards of production and logistics. The Autoneum Production System (APS) is based on a culture of operational excellence and continuous improvement. It is also essential that the company protects its Tier 1 automotive supplier status.

"The automotive industry requires its suppliers operate to strict standards," said Domonkos Gaspar, head of manufacturing digitization at Autoneum. "This puts pressure on production and logistics to operate in a streamlined and efficient way. An enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution is essential, because it's important that we can locate and account for every product throughout the manufacturing process. Orders must be exact, run to time, and be delivered accurately—otherwise the whole supply chain is disrupted."

Solution

- ▶ Epicor® iScala® and iCollect

Benefits

- ▶ Provided efficient, standardised processes across the whole value chain
- ▶ Improved operational visibility and transparency
- ▶ Streamlined business operations
- ▶ Introduced master data management
- ▶ Enabled further process improvements and digitalisation

Rapid business growth

Autoneum's operations in Asia have experienced unprecedented growth in recent years, with the Chinese market in particular helping to propel the company to new heights. China is the world's largest automotive market with more than 27 million light vehicles produced annually, and it is one of the most important emerging markets of the automotive industry.

Autoneum China has consistently achieved growth of 25 percent per year for the last five years, and the company now has nine plants situated across the region—with plans to open more. This rapid and consistent growth has put pressures on its business operations and processes to keep up.

"With the market expanding so rapidly in Asia—and with new plants due to open—we required an ERP system that could grow with us and a partner who understands and supports us in achieving the benefits we expect from this program," said Gaspar. "We had already partnered with Epicor in China for seven years and knew the iScala solution well. So, even though we

looked at other options, the latest iScala solution was the logical choice to turn to to support our new plants in North and East China. We knew the Epicor team would offer the strategic support we needed and help us develop a robust, integrated solution that would support our continued expansion.”

Improving visibility and transparency

Epicor worked closely with Autoneum to ensure the new implementation of iScala matched its requirements and integrated with existing systems. The solution was developed with real-time data processing and visibility in mind to provide the Autoneum team with a holistic view of its business operations—allowing staff to monitor projects, check orders, and sustain growth as it opened new locations.

Following a successful pilot in its Shenyang plant, Autoneum developed a standard implementation process and began the rollout of the latest iScala solution in its Taicang plant in China. The idea was to test the system as a proof of concept and to closely monitor its impact on the organisation’s business processes.

The iScala solution enables Autoneum to monitor exactly what is happening in production in real time. The software provides the team with business data transparency. System notifications also mean that managers now have full visibility and control of everything from production to delivery. By pooling data from its production facilities, every component is tracked across its life cycle.

Master data management (MDM) links all of the company’s critical data, providing a common point of reference and data sharing among personnel and departments. These improvements to the company’s data responsiveness allow Autoneum to create streamlined supply chains with suppliers, partners, and customers.

New warehouse management functionality—made available via an Epicor partner—means Autoneum can identify product batches and locations with bar codes. This is especially important because the automotive industry has strict traceability criteria for all the components that go into a vehicle.

Next steps

Following the successful trial period, the new operating model and software rollout is in

progress. As a global business, Autoneum has benefited from the insight gained from enabling plants across the continent to input data directly from different locations. As the company continues to grow in the region, the Autoneum team expects to use data-based insights to keep improving its business operations—fuelling further growth.

Gaspar commented, “iScala enables us to make the right decisions at the right time, which is critical for fast-growth businesses like ours. We are operatively capitalising on standardised processes, data sets, and reporting. As an international business that has significant cross-border trading requirements, with iScala in place, we’re now able to implement global strategies due to the visibility we have into how our business operates.”

“We’re looking forward to continuing the rollout of the solution to all our plants in the region with the objective of helping our company grow even further. To do this, we rely on having a knowledgeable and flexible partner like Epicor to support us, not just for a single project, but on a strategic level across all our operations,” Gaspar concluded.

About Epicor

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