



## Eliminates tough downtime issues with Epicor Informance

### Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Chicago, Illinois
- ▶ Industry: Manufacturer of Clorox bleach products for the Midwestern United States
- ▶ Web site: [www.clorox.com](http://www.clorox.com)



### Success Highlights

#### Challenges

- ▶ Replace manual processes with automated data capture and accurate, consistent efficiency metrics
- ▶ Boost overall equipment effectiveness (OEE)
- ▶ Build a culture of understanding and driving out losses on the plant floor
- ▶ Accurately benchmark against other plants across the Clorox cleaning products division

#### Solution

- ▶ Epicor Informance Enterprise Manufacturing Intelligence (EMI) system

#### Benefits

- ▶ Real-time scorecards and scoreboards on the shop floor
- ▶ Easy-to-use, easy-to-understand visual solution to drive root cause analysis
- ▶ Out-of-the-box visibility, reporting, and analysis for fast time-to-value
- ▶ Pre-implementation project ensured successful startup to go-live

### The Clorox Company, Chicago manufacturing site

The Clorox Company is a global manufacturer of food, chemical, and consumer products based in Oakland, California, which is best known for its namesake bleach product, Clorox. A product that is well known to the vast majority of households, the Clorox cleaning products division delivers a variety of products and supplies to keep homes clean and laundry strain-free and fresh. The company's manufacturing site in Chicago, Illinois is responsible for producing a large portfolio of its bleach products to serve the midwestern United States. The high-speed, mixed-mode manufacturing plant operates 24/5, running two 8 to 10-hour production shifts per day, and on average produces nearly 15,000 cases per shift.

### The challenge

Plant Manager Levi Leake oversees all functions of manufacturing and product distribution from the Chicago site. When Leake first joined the site he knew it was imperative to have a system in place to accurately track and analyze performance and downtime issues, and deliver metrics to benchmark against other plants in their division.

"Without an automatic system, operators had to enter downtime data on a spreadsheet which was prone to human error," says Leake as he explains a

host of reasons why manual processes resulted in huge swings of data. “With manual systems we couldn’t accurately state when the downtime occurred or for how long.”

Epicor Informance has been successfully deployed in numerous Clorox plants throughout North America. When the Chicago site was approved to move forward with implementation, Leake put together an internal team to manage the project. For the Chicago site, a few goals in particular would determine the success of the system:

1. Increase OEE
2. Build a culture of owning performance on the plant floor
3. Accurately benchmark against other plants in their division

In the history of the company, the Chicago plant had only gone above a 70 percent efficiency mark once. “The goal was to make sure that running at 70 percent OEE was the norm, and because of the visibility to our line losses Epicor Informance provided, we achieved that goal. Plus, we’ve reset performance and downtime expectations, and employees on the plant floor uphold a higher set of standards for success. With the system in place, we’re also able to benchmark our performance against the other plants in our division. Our site was one of the few plants that didn’t have the EMI system, but we were still required to report on our performance, and we were held accountable for the plant’s results. Epicor Informance puts us on an even par with the other sites.”

## Pre-implementation

Before going live with Epicor Informance, the Chicago plant worked with the Epicor Professional Services team to co-manage a pre-implementation project. The Clorox Company utilizes this early management approach, a structured project management methodology, as a standard process step to ensure a successful startup at go live to help drive quicker performance gains. The multi-step, pre-implementation process is instrumental to capture the voice of the customer (i.e. plant users; from operators to management) to develop and align the project scope and target criteria, and ensure that structured hands-on training activities educate users prior to go live.

According to Leake, one of the key activities of the pre-implementation effort that helped to drive project success was the “drum beat” meetings with its SCDLP Project Engineer, Nanette Magezi, and Senior Engineer, Roger Salzman. “Whether it was phone calls, site visits or face-to-face meetings to go through specific aspects of the system and how-to lessons; that coaching and teaching piece was significant for us because we were able to understand not only the system but what we needed from the system. As Nanette and Roger began to learn and understand the program and its capabilities, they were able to optimize its features to suit our site’s needs. Taking that early management approach, plus the consistent meetings and

support from Epicor as needed, put us in the right position to fly independent of our Epicor team at go live.

In addition, this approach helped to build capability within the staff. Nanette really shined throughout the pre-implementation process. She has become one of the best in her program across the company because of the Epicor Informance system. Her ability to learn how to use the system to drive plant performance and results, and train other employees to do the same thing, has been the key to her success. She really took it to the next level. For other employees that aren’t as close to the system, the pre-implementation process was instrumental to encouraging additional subject matter experts to learn a new skill set so they can easily step in when their colleagues are out.

We have nothing but high praise for the Epicor Professional Services team. Because Epicor had worked with other Clorox sites, we immediately felt at ease that they understood our company’s culture. The level of professionalism was excellent, and the early strategy sessions really helped to guide us through the process. I’ve been a part of many implementation projects and after the first couple of meetings it was easy to see how well Epicor connected with our group. They did their due diligence and were always available for questions.

The pre-implementation approach was a critical step to a successful implementation. It’s the catalyst to intelligently equip your team to understand the right way to use the system,” says Leake.

## Going live

Epicor Informance was fully implemented within two months at the Clorox Chicago plant—including defining scope to pre-implementation coaching, training, and go live. Epicor Informance tracks all key production components of the site’s molding and packaging lines, including 15 individual machines.

“We realized the benefits of Epicor Informance immediately,” says Leake, who adds that this success is indicative of the efforts invested upfront and the system’s out-of-the-box EMI functionality which proved an especially fast time-to-value. “Within one week we knew it was the right system for us.”

In addition to the base solution, the Chicago team relies heavily on the system’s scorecards, dashboards, and scoreboards. The scorecards provide a real-time summary of key metrics and performance factors that were defined up front and tailored specifically for the Chicago plant, while the scoreboards display the information on large screen monitors to help operators remain aware of performance results. Operators can spot problems instantly then drill down to quickly get to the root cause, which has resulted in a shift from operators being reactive to proactively resolving issues.

## Significant gains in OEE

Real-time data collection and monitoring trends have had significant impact on line performance which translates to big gains in OEE. "Real-time data and measurement with Epicor Informance is the catalyst for our plant's excellent performance. It has helped us go from low to mid-60 percent OEE to mid-70 OEE in just a matter of months. Better productivity equates to more dollars saved in operational costs and more stacked cases, both of which contribute substantially to our bottom line. We just needed something to get us over the hump. Now we consistently run in the mid to high 70 percent OEE, sometimes close to 80 percent. We're breaking records every month. We've even been recognized as a premier site for efficiency in our division, so we've gone from being the worst to first place and Epicor Informance is a huge part of that accomplishment," says Leake.

Eliminating downtime with the plant's Krones labeler is just one example of a standard work process that Epicor Informance helped improve. "We didn't know if the problem was the labeler, the proximity of the bottles, or the end feed of the system. Real-time data helped us intelligently identify where the gaps were per component. Before Epicor Informance, we ran at eight percent downtime, and now, with the data we're able to pull from the system, we're down to just two percent."

## Redefining daily meetings

In addition to boosting efficiency on the plant floor, Epicor Informance has redefined the site's daily shift meetings. "We used to chase our tails in meetings trying to figure out what the problems were. Epicor Informance has helped to streamline

everyone's focus on the root cause. Instead of discussing what we think the issues are, now everyone has a singular focus on what we can do to drive better performance per shift, per week, and per month. With complete, accurate data, we have a clear agenda for every meeting, and we're able to have healthy dialog about operational issues and develop a strategic game plan to address them," says Leake.

"Prior to implementing the system I put a performance model in place: going from good to great. A large part of that journey was driving the efficiency that we knew we could drive. The challenge for us was how do we drive it, and where do we start? Epicor Informance was the perfect starting point," adds Leake.

## A day without Epicor Informance

When asked to describe what a day without Epicor Informance might look like, Leake answers: "We have lived through that day, before we implemented Epicor Informance, and it would be a day of poor direction, operational uncertainty, disconnection between real-time results, and the processes we have in place to drive those results. We would still run, but we would underperform like we did before, at 60 percent efficiency."

## Conclusion

"I've used similar systems, but I haven't seen anything as cool as Epicor Informance. It's one of the most critical pieces to have in a manufacturing environment when it comes to efficiency. If a site wants to drive efficiency they have to have an EMI system. We're extremely pleased and impressed with the level of professionalism and expertise at Epicor," concludes Leake.

## About Epicor

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