

case study



Warsteiner Group Taps Into Delicious Efficiency with a Rugged Mobile Solution from Intermec by Honeywell

The Warsteiner Group is one of the oldest and most famous brewing enterprises in Germany. The family business, established in 1753, values both tradition and continuous innovation in marketing and technology. So, when it comes to quality assurance, they rely on Intermec by Honeywell technology to help ensure consistent product quality.

Besides the Warstein Brewery, which is famous well beyond the borders of Germany, the group of companies also owns the Herford Brewery, the Frankenheim Private Brewery in Düsseldorf, shares in the König Ludwig Castle Brewery in Kaltenberg and the Paderborn Brewery. In all, the Warsteiner Group consists of approximately 120 individual companies worldwide and is, therefore, one of the most successful, owner-operated brewing groups in Germany. The business, with approximately 2,200 employees, generates a turnover of 522 million euros a year and produces 460 million litres of beer.

Honeywell

One of the driving principles of the Warsteiner Group is “To develop, produce and ensure quality”. This begins with selecting the raw materials to be used: the water, hops and malt. However, the company also pursues the highest quality standards in brewing and bottling too. So at Warsteiner all production sites have been awarded the certificate for food safety management systems in accordance with the international standard DIN EN ISO 22000:2005.



There is an in-house quality management information system to ensure the quality assurance requirements are met during the brewing process. This includes checks upon supply of the hops and other raw materials, checks throughout the entire production process and checks during bottling and loading of the finished product onto truck or train. Central to this system is the chemical and biological laboratory based at the company headquarters in Warstein. Here, samples taken from all production stages are continuously examined. Checks are made throughout, from the brewing water from the Arnsberg

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— Werner Mittrup, Corporate Management, Warstein Brewery

Forest through to the finished beer, the quality of which, being a foodstuff, must still be ensured even if it is transported or stored incorrectly – for example if it is stored in a place that is much too warm.

Raw materials, such as the brewing malt, are also checked in the laboratory for grain size as well as possible mould growth. Even the glass bottles and bottle caps used must be continuously checked.

Good is Not Good Enough

“Our commitment to quality goes way beyond the legal requirements. We also attach great importance to fast reaction times should anything fail to meet our standards at some point,” explains Werner Mittrup, member of the management

team at Warstein Brewery. And this is precisely where Warsteiner managed to achieve further optimisation thanks to the latest technology from Intermec by Honeywell. With the Intermec by Honeywell CN70 mobile computer that is now used in quality assurance in the laboratory, production and bottling, checks are even more effective and efficient. The barcode solution they used to use offered lower overall functionality and was by comparison susceptible to input errors. It also did not allow direct feedback to the central system.

Thanks to a connection via WLAN, which is available in most areas, the direct feedback they wanted is now possible without any problems. The mobile device retrieves data from the central server and should a fault arise, it is possible to precisely locate which batch or which raw material supply is causing the problem. Through the CN70 display, the employee is provided with precise information regarding what needs to be done at which sampling point – and these tasks are detailed step-by-step. As a result, input errors and errors caused by everyday routine are minimised. The greatest advantage, however, is that using the devices via a WLAN connection allows an extremely fast reaction time if something does not happen the way it should.

CN70 Mobile Computer is a Winner

The Intermec by Honeywell CN70 used at Warsteiner is designed for mobile applications that require a computer that is compact yet very robust. The latter, in particular, is of great benefit in the production environment of the brewery business, which can be quite “rough”. The CN70 uses advanced barcode imaging technology with high motion tolerance for fast scanning and white illumination with laser aiming for high read rates. As standard, the CN70 offers high compatibility with printers, application software and other communication devices.

The Intermec mobile computer beat several other competitors' products in the battle to win over the brewery. The technical management team at Warsteiner were particularly impressed with the device's excellent scanner. The WLAN reception came out on top too, despite the difficult environment of the brewery with its large amounts of liquids and stainless steel tanks. "For us, the CN70's extremely fast scanning capabilities and excellent performance in the WLAN were key in the decision to buy," affirmed Werner Mittrup. Furthermore, thanks to open standard interfaces, interaction with the Siemens Unilab laboratory information and management system used in the Warsteiner laboratory also went very well.

Great Advice from a Trusted Partner

Prior to the acquisition of over 50 of these mobile computers, the Warsteiner Group got in touch with Intermec by Honeywell PartnerNet Partner ID-Solutions GmbH & Co. KG in Gießen. The long-time Intermec by Honeywell partner specialises in customer-specific barcode and RFID solutions. After numerous consultations with ID-Solutions and extensive presentations, equipment testing and analysis, the experts at Warsteiner decided to buy the Intermec CN70 devices. After the preliminary work performed by the laboratory software provider came the configuration, software setup and commissioning of the new

Intermec by Honeywell devices together with ID-Solutions – right in the middle of the Company's busy Christmas period. "It all went extremely well," stressed Werner Mittrup, talking about the successful collaboration with the Intermec by Honeywell partner. The devices have been integrated and commissioned at the breweries in Herford, Paderborn and Fürstenfeldbruck too. "With the assistance of the Intermec [by Honeywell] products and the know-how of ID-Solutions, we have managed to further raise our high quality standards within a short timeframe," is Werner Mittrup's positive conclusion.

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