

Enhanced ERP software has met more users' needs

By listening to the customers – and acting upon their suggestions – Aptean has continually evolved its flagship Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software to increasingly meet its customers' needs.

Based on information gleaned from its customer advisory board in quarterly meetings along with a yearly user conference, Aptean, of Alpharetta, Ga., has enhanced its flagship ERP software suite, which includes Axis, to increasingly meet more and more of its users' needs. That continual evolution coupled with the company's purchase of AssetPoint earned Aptean the AMM Award for Steel Excellence as Information Technology Provider of the Year.

AssetPoint is a leading computerized maintenance management software offering provider that was acquired by Aptean in very early 2016. In making the announcement, Aptean chief executive officer Kim Eaton said that "AssetPoint's mission-critical asset management solution, TabWare is a natural extension to Aptean's ERP software suite, enabling us to offer additional best-in-class solutions to our customers while providing synergistic growth opportunities to both companies."

Aptean's flagship ERP Axis suite is specifically designed for metal makers involved in melting, casting, rolling, forging, drawing extruding, blanking, leveling and/or slitting. It is serviced by in-house consultants with broad and deep business and metals industry backgrounds with an average of 20 years of experience.

The acquisition of AssetPoint opened the door for Aptean to offer to metal processors Tabware, which is a comprehensive Computerized Maintenance Management System/Enterprise Asset Management (CMMS/EAM) solution that helps organizations more effectively manage their expensive equipment, spare parts inventory and purchasing operations.

"AssetPoint allowed Aptean to grow inorganically through an acquisition that fits well within Axis," said Stevie Hay, senior director of Axis and AssetPoint product lines. The acquisition of AssetPoint helps compa-



nies better manage their shop-floor assets, "eliminating the worries that keep operators up at night. With today's Axis, we can prevent machine downtime as the software complements predictive maintenance initiatives," Hay said.

AssetPoint's Tabware solution offers metals companies a myriad of opportunities to better view and better manage equipment, spare parts inventory and purchasing operations. Tabware fills a key gap in Axis' functionality for the metals industry and complements its current capabilities. Functionality specific to the metals industry includes:

- Business Intelligence dashboards that show key performance indicators such as maintenance costs, equipment downtime and inventory, with drill-down capability to spot areas of concern and quickly get to the details.

- Effective work planning and scheduling, easy review and approvals of work orders, projects, requisitions and purchase orders, integrated spare parts inventory management and streamlined requisitions.

- Scheduling capabilities that visually help evaluate and prioritize work needs to expedite the planning and scheduling process.

- Automatic collection of equipment meter readings and other critical events to trigger required maintenance.

In addition to managing production efficiency, the Axis suite provides a multitude

of benefits across the entire metals business. It helps convert quotes into sales, effectively manage complex business models involving multiple currencies and locations, ensure regulatory compliance of production assets, shorten sales cycles, and maximize the use of analytics and dashboards among others.

Taking the users' needs to heart, Aptean is looking at additional enhancements to its Axis suite. "We envision in the next few years we plan more development to enhance mobile and online tools to help turn status calls into sales as well as to increase the ability to take corrective actions around the cost of quality," Hay said.

Another user-requested effort gaining momentum is the expanded use of eCommerce and Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). "Although EDI has been around for a long time, customers are seeing its benefit for maximizing systems, particularly as they pertain to working with subcontractors outside processors to move and manage products through their facilities," Hay said.

As time moves forward, Aptean will continue to meet with its users and consider their suggestions and needs for the next generation of enhancements to Axis and its functionality. To paraphrase Hay, Aptean wants to put its users' minds at ease, thus allowing them to get a good night's sleep.

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