



## SAP: STRATEGIC PLATFORM

In October 2003, ABL decided to look for a new, Web-based solution that would improve both the forward planning and the order entry process for its customers while, at the same time, providing its suppliers with more accurate supply plans. “We drew up a tender document and developed a business case: we analyzed our existing business and industrial processes, identified our objectives

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and defined the functionality needed to ensure the optimized processes”, explained Eddy Haulet, IT Project Manager from Coca-Cola. “As a large part of the team is located in the Brussels Coca-Cola office and a lot of SAP expertise is available here, we decided to implement the project from Belgium, making it available to all our European locations.”

ABL shortlisted two vendors and was soon convinced that SAP was the best option. They decided to implement SAP’s Advanced Planning and Optimization (APO) component, with the SAP Demand Planning and SAP Network Supply Planning solutions. “SAP is the strategic platform for The Coca-Cola Company. Our company has been using SAP R/3 for years and is very satisfied. Also, from a purely technical point of view, the SAP solution seemed the most rational one, as it would allow us to integrate the new solution into the existing software package. Moreover, SAP had just released a new, upgraded version of the APO solution so we took advantage from the ramp-up program with its specific advantages”, Haulet pointed out.

## RAPID IMPLEMENTATION

The project was approved in January 2004. In four weeks’ time, ABL and SAP consultants managed to develop a blueprint for improving the Supply Chain management at ABL. The implementation itself started in February. Haulet: “The project had to be finished in five months’ time. To successfully complete such a complex project in such an astonishingly short time, required a rigid work plan. Our highly motivated and committed team, consisting of a project leader and four ABL experts, met weekly and was largely instrumental in the success. In addition, we could always count on SAP support and fall back on our colleagues at corporate headquarters in Atlanta, where the infrastructure is located. Via frequent conference calls, we cooperated very closely, at each step, with the IT staff in the US.”

On 28 April 2004, ABL went live with the SAP Demand Planning solution. SAP Supply Network Planning was field-tested at the largest ABL supplier, where it ran in parallel with the old system for

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six weeks. “In this way, we could pinpoint any teething troubles and design them out”, explained Verschuere. “In addition, it was an ideal vehicle for familiarizing the end-users with the new system and for proving how SAP could outperform its old platform and ensure outstanding transparency.” The entire SAP APO component was up and running as early as July 2004. In addition, ABL installed some improved inventory follow-up solutions to further strengthen its existing reporting component.

## EVERY BOTTLE COUNTS

“Expectations were high but were met in every respect”, said Haulet. “We wanted a Web-based planning tool that would be a perfect collaborative model, allowing us to optimize communications and planning with everyone involved in the supply chain. With SAP APO, the bottlers, our customers, can now register the orders themselves, thereby cutting down on the paperwork at our offices and helping us anticipate better their orders and purchase our raw materials just-in-time. There is greater transparency: our customers now get a faultless overview of the production in the weeks to come. With SAP SNP we can plan our production and filling activities on a weekly basis so that we can plan the long-term purchasing needs for bottles, labels and concentrates – ensuring there’s no unexpected shortage of raw materials. In addition, due to the Web-based planning tool we can now impose rules that everyone has to follow, which is a guarantee for uniform business processes. So both our efficiency and customer service have increased significantly.”

“Every bottle counts’ and getting it right is of great importance. With SAP BW, we improve plant efficiency and quickly take the right decisions. As the actual production data are also reported, bottlers can now plan their shipments more efficiently from the co-packer to the customer. In addition, errors are reduced and we save money due to a reduced storage cost of finished goods, for example”, Verschuere continued.

## 12 MILLION BOTTLES

“We’re delighted with the new SAP tool”, concluded Verschuere. “30 bottlers currently order 12 million bottles online each week to meet European demand. And that was our prime objective at the outset. In addition, we now have a robust and well-integrated IT environment, thereby safeguarding the company’s future and underpinning future expansion.”

## At a glance :

<b>SAP Solution Components :</b>	SAP Advanced Planning and Optimization (APO 4.1) SAP Business Warehouse (BW 3.1)
<b>Number of users</b>	120
<b>Implementation time</b>	6 months
<b>Implementation partners</b>	SAP Belgium