

JBT's ERP Platform Does a Tour of Europe The Italian Way Is the Best Practice

Thanks to the success of the projects launched with the Liquid Food division in Parma, JBT's other European sites opt for Sinfo One systems

Interview with Marco Tonelli, Food Tech Strategic Finance Director at JBT

by Elisabetta de Luca

JBT

Headquarters

Parma

Business

Manufacture of machinery for the food & beverage industry

Staff

100 employees

Turnover

€ 32 million

Ownership

Family

“Oracle’s JD Edwards EnterpriseOne is an integrated applications suite that combines business value, standards-based technology and deep industry experience into a business solution with a low total cost of ownership. Only this solution offers more choice of databases, operating systems and hardware so you can build and expand your IT solution to meet business requirements”. This is the description of JD Edwards that can be found on Oracle’s website. These words might be just a marketing exercise if it weren’t for the testimonies of those who have been able to reap the benefits of this ERP platform first hand. That is the case for the Italian Liquid Foods division of JBT Corporation, a US manufacturer of food processing machinery and airport equipment, which, thanks to Sinfo One, decided to adopt JD Edwards several years ago. Here to tell us about what happened at JBT Italia’s Parma headquarters is **Marco Tonelli, the company’s Food Tech Strategic Finance Director**: “The company’s Italian arm was founded in 1960, and

acted as a distributor in the Mediterranean region of products developed at other Group sites. Over the years, our Parma premises began to adopt its own technological identity, especially with regard to its thermal treatment of food, particularly tomatoes and other fruits and vegetables, and its tuna canning process, thereby developing its own special expertise. What makes us stand out is our strong focus on customer support in seeking innovative solutions and new product development. We are a company that works on a contract basis and cannot rely on serial products or high sales volumes. Our strength lies in our customised products, which we tailor to meet the specific needs of our customers”.

Strong local roots

Over time, JBT Italia grew, becoming a well-established entity in its local area: “We have always had a fairly stable workforce, with 100 employees, but we also take on seasonal workers during peak production periods. In 2017, we generated turnover of €32 million”.

MARCO TONELLI



Born in Bologna, Marco Tonelli joined JBT in Parma as CFO in 2004. His career has involved accruing vast experience both in Italy and abroad, working at several multinationals. In 2011, he assumed the role of Global Controller of the Fruit&Juice Segment. Since 2016, he has been Strategic Finance Director of the Food Tech Division, with responsibility for M&A, corporate organisation and implementation of improvement systems and processes.



JBT's factory in Parma, the company is specialized in food heat treatment

Tonelli goes into more detail about the company's activities: "A large part of our work consists of the processing, pasteurisation and sterilised packaging of products and foods that are subsequently reprocessed for bottling. That's what we call the 'primary phase', from raw material to packaging in tins or bags". We were talking about the company's strong local roots: its ties to Parma are what make JBT such a successful company: "We are based in Italy's 'Food Valley', where we can make use of advanced expertise in the food sector.

We are located in a region that enables us to compete with our biggest rivals in Italy". Seven years ago, JBT Italia met Sinfo One, the Parma-based software house and system integrator: "We were looking for a management system that was suitable for an SME – which JBT's Italian unit effectively is – but that offered cutting-edge contract management and cost analysis tools. In JD Edwards and the Sinfo One team, we found the ideal partners with which to meet these needs".

A partner that knows and understands the company's needs

This first encounter led to a fruitful collaboration that brought the Italian company numerous benefits: "The im-

plementation time frame was extremely quick, going live in just four months, and the costs were kept low. We stayed fully within the budget we had allocated, which is exceptional, since projects of this kind usually entail hidden costs". The collaboration between JBT Italia and Sinfo One has kept going to this day: "Ever since we introduced JD Edwards, we have continued to develop the product in line with our corporate strategies. Sinfo One has played a key role in this over the last seven years. The good thing is that our contacts



JBT whole fruit extractor on a compact skid

at Sinfo One have never changed, so we are talking to consultants who know our company well, which means it's easy for them to understand our needs". JBT Italia initially chose Sinfo One because of its local connection and geographical proximity to the company's premises. "However, we were pleasantly surprised by the company's international reach. We are currently approaching the roll-out of a project across all our other European offices, and we have discovered the international scope that Sinfo One is pursuing, both directly and via the Redfaire International network. That is why we have decided to entrust the company with all our system implementations, particularly when it comes to our projects in Belgium and the Netherlands. We consider the management system to be a fundamental task, particularly in terms of the implementation of new strategies and improvement of processes".

JBT Italia brings Sinfo One to the rest of Europe

In January 2019, the implementation of the Sinfo One systems will be at an advanced stage in Belgium: "I recently met with some colleagues after the

completion of the gap analysis, and the findings were very positive. They told me that they believe the JD Edwards solution suits their business model very well, as was the case with us. In fact, it was our extremely positive experience in Italy that influenced the choices of the other European sites". JBT's information system is developed in Brazil and localised for the company's various premises. Sinfo One, claims Tonelli, has been able to keep the same system model and adapt it well to each local situation: "It has been a very effective partner in this". Sinfo One has recently worked on creating a new portal for JBT Italia, dedicated to suppliers and vertical warehouse management: "We will take advantage of this opportunity to review our entire warehouse management system. Soon we will conclude projects concerning the administration of expense accounts and travel", says Tonelli.

"We never stand still, and Sinfo One can monitor the development of our business". JD Edwards will also be implemented at other sites at the same time: "Thanks to the implementation of Sinfo One systems at other production sites in Europe, we expect to considerably improve information sharing between the various production hubs. Until now, the different management systems have prevented us from working in an integrated way. Having a single platform and a single management system will improve communications", says the Food Tech Strategic Finance Director.

The project is part of a broader initiative aimed at improving the circulation of information within an organisational structure like JBT's, which consists of various different branches: "The company has set up a Madrid-based hub to coordinate all administrative processes for all of its European sites. We expect this operation to also be carried out for other departments, such as the purchasing division. The aim is to harmonise communications in order to improve our processes". JBT Corporation has a global workforce of 6,200, with total turnover of over \$1.5 billion, of which the Liquid Foods division, which is implementing the Sinfo One solutions in Europe, accounts for around one third. A great potential customer base for Sinfo One.



The exterior of JBT headquarters in Parma