

Powering production: RKW Group drives operational insights with Jaspersoft®

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Challenge

Too many reports and too little flexibility stifled global operations

RKW Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of film-based packaging solutions. From hygiene and industrial films to food-grade packaging, their products protect many of the things we consume on a daily basis. With over a dozen production plants worldwide, RKW required a robust solution to track, analyze, and report on various manufacturing metrics, including raw material usage and machine downtime.

At the heart of their operations is a Manufacturing Execution System (MES), which continuously collects data from their production floors. This data powers operational decisions across quality, production, dispatch, and management. But for years, that data was tied up in a legacy reporting platform based on Crystal Reports, a system that was not only outdated but also facing deprecation.

"Our old reporting was based on Crystal Reports, and that was only working in Microsoft Internet Explorer," said Julian Lorenz, Manager, Applications & Networks. "One day Microsoft said, 'We won't support that anymore,' and we had to act quickly."

Beyond the looming end-of-life issues, the old system was rigid, hard to maintain, and expensive to scale. It relied on a Windows Server 2003 setup that could only handle five concurrent users per site. Plus, it required managing over 400 individual reports, many of which were redundant or outdated. RKW needed a flexible, modern solution that could serve hundreds of users, streamline operations, and scale with their needs.

Solution

A modern reporting platform built for manufacturing complexity

RKW evaluated several business intelligence and reporting tools, including Power BI, but most platforms weren't built to meet the unique needs of a manufacturing environment. They couldn't provide the level of detail and flexibility RKW required.

"We tested Power BI and others," Julian explained. "They looked great for high-level graphs, but when we needed detailed, item-based reporting, they just couldn't do it."

Today, Jaspersoft powers reporting across 14 RKW production sites, each with its own MES database. The platform pulls detailed production data, like shift productivity, machine downtimes, and inventory blocks, and transforms it into clear, customizable reports.

Reports are accessed through a custom web application that feeds user parameters directly into Jaspersoft. That means everyone from shift supervisors to senior managers gets the exact data they need, when they need it.

"We mainly use Jaspersoft to generate pixel-perfect reports based on data from our MES system," said Marvin Becker, Operational Excellence Manager.

With Jaspersoft in place, the team replaced 430 legacy reports with just 29 flexible, purpose-built ones. Here's how Jaspersoft made the biggest difference:

Pixel-perfect, printable reports

Operators needed to print reports and take them to the production floor. But many BI tools focus on dashboards, not printable formats. Not every team member sits at a desk. Some supervisors need to walk the floor, ask questions, and jot down notes. The reports had to be easy to print, read, and understand on standard A4 paper.

Jaspersoft's pixel-perfect reporting made it easy to generate clean, structured PDFs that met RKW's printing standards.

"It must be simple for the use cases," Marvin said. "People are paid to be next to machines, not playing around in reporting."

Granular, item-based traceability

Manufacturing traceability requires tracking every product batch, often times down to the individual roll. If a customer like a large food processor raises a question, RKW needs to trace the

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430

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29

flexible, purpose-built &
pixel-perfect reports

- ✓ reduced costs
- ✓ reduced maintenance
- ✓ streamlined operations

packaging's origin: which shift made it, which machine it ran on, and what materials were used.

With item-level detail, teams can trace any roll back to its production data.

"We can see what machine it was produced on, what shift, what operator, and even which recipe was used," Marvin explained.

Flexible filtering and customization

Users across sites needed different data views, but RKW wanted to avoid creating dozens of new reports. Managing hundreds of reports was costly and hard to maintain. The team wanted fewer, smarter reports that could be tailored to each user.

With help from Jaspersoft's customer success team, RKW created dynamic reports with custom filters. Users can now select which columns to display, save their own views, and work more independently.

"Now we can aggregate reports into one," Julian said. "The user just builds the layout they need."

Scheduled reporting for always-on visibility

Managers and quality leads needed daily updates, but pulling reports manually was inefficient. Decisions can't wait for someone to log in and build a report. Operations needed real-time visibility delivered automatically.

With scheduled reports, site managers receive pixel-perfect daily production summaries by email to their phones.

"While he is having his breakfast, he can already see if it was a good or bad day," said Julian.

The same goes for quality managers reviewing blocked or released inventory.

Responsive support and continuous improvement

Some platforms offer support only when something breaks. RKW wanted a more collaborative partnership. With ongoing needs and evolving use cases, RKW wanted quick answers and trusted advice.

"Whenever we raise a case, support is super friendly and fast," Julian said. "We hop on a video call and look into the problem directly."

The team also praised Jaspersoft's willingness to help develop new features and guide implementations.



RKW Group is one of the world's foremost manufacturers of polyolefin-based film solutions. Their innovative and sustainable films are market leaders in the areas of hygiene and agricultural films as well as films for the food and beverage industries and powdery goods. Moreover, they supply films and nonwovens for the chemical and processing industries as well as the medical, automotive and construction sectors. The independent family-owned company is headquartered in Mannheim, Germany and employs approximately 2,800 people across 17 locations worldwide.

Results

Daily insights with less effort, reducing 430 reports to 29

From the initial proof-of-concept phase, Jaspersoft demonstrated its ability to handle the granular reporting needs of a complex, multi-site manufacturing operation. It was flexible, customizable, and backed by responsive support that made implementation smooth.

Since switching to Jaspersoft, RKW has dramatically reduced the number of reports they maintain, from 430 to just 29. That's a 93% reduction in reporting overhead. Today, about 300 users across 14 sites rely on Jaspersoft reports every day to monitor production, trace batches, and manage inventory.

"We use Jaspersoft every single day, seven days a week," said Marvin. "It saves us time, reduces training, and gives our users what they need."

The move to Jaspersoft achieved much more than replacing an outdated system. It gave RKW a scalable, flexible platform that supports better decision-making across their operations. And with less time spent on maintenance, the team can stay focused on delivering quality and efficiency across every production line.



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