



## AMEFA CENTRALIZES ITS INFORMATION FLOWS WITH IFS APPLICATIONS

**Integrated information flows are a critical success factor for Amefa, based in Apeldoorn, The Netherlands, and active worldwide as a wholesaler of cutlery and kitchen knives. The company has been using IFS Applications since 2008. The Dutch, German and Polish subsidiaries are running the ERP software: the next step is to implement IFS Applications in England and France.**

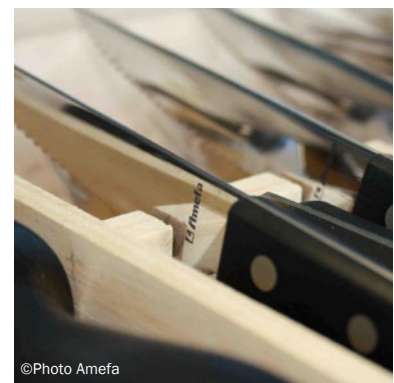
Since the 1970s, Amefa has transitioned from a being a manufacturing and trading company to focusing exclusively on wholesale, distribution and service. The company outsources almost all its production to factories in China. Sales operations in Europe have grown in particular through various acquisitions in England, France and Germany. In 2006 Amefa acquired Couzon, a French manufacturer of cutlery and other kitchenware. This was followed in 2007 by the acquisition of Richardson Sheffield, the market leader in England in the area of kitchen knives.

### CENTRAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

“We deliver to both the consumer and professional markets”, says Martin Barkel, IT manager at Amefa. In the light of its growth in recent years, Amefa started to look for a new ERP solution that could respond well to new developments. Important requirements included multi-site, multi-language and multi-currency capabilities. After a selection process, the company opted for IFS Applications. The solution has been implemented to date in the subsidiaries in The Netherlands, Germany, Poland and China. “IFS Applications is now the central information system for all our activities in these subsidiaries,” says Barkel. “We deploy IFS Applications for all our purchases, sales, financial administration, quality control, forecasting and logistics. In addition, the individual countries get the level of operational agility they require. There are clear differences between countries in terms of the cutlery lines and markets we serve. In one country, for instance, the main focus is on the professional catering industry; in another country, the consumer market is more important. Whatever the case, all purchasing and manufacturing take place in China. In the various countries, we also set up purchase orders in the central system based on forecasting in IFS Applications. The subsidiaries in China check to see which factory can best execute on the order.” For Amefa, tight planning is critical because the company

### ABOUT AMEFA

Netherlands-based Amefa (Apeldoornse Messenfabriek Amefa) was founded in 1931, when the founder, Eugen Hollaender, began manufacturing razors. Faced with the threat of being forced out of the market by bigger manufacturers, he made a timely switch to the production of cutlery. Hollaender traveled the globe in search of trade and new ideas. In 1993 production at Amefa was discontinued, and the company transformed its operations, importing cutlery and kitchen knives from Asia. As well as its own brand, Amefa offers a range of private labels.



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is a regular provider to large supermarkets. “Supermarkets often run campaigns featuring our products, which they include in their promotional material. So it is crucial for us that we can deliver on time.”

### STANDARDIZATION

Amefa hosts the IFS solution at Easynet, a managed network, hosting and telepresence company, in a data center in Schiphol-Rijk, in the Netherlands. In addition, Easynet takes care of the connections with the various subsidiaries worldwide. In 2012, Amefa connected the last two international subsidiaries to the IFS Applications ERP software. Thus, since 2012, the entire company is standardized on this platform. Barkel says, “The most important reason for carrying out this standardization process is to increase insight into all our processes. As long as certain subsidiaries continue to run their own business software, there will never be one hundred percent certainty about the way things stand at any given time. This can be avoided by having all subsidiaries operate on the same solution. This gives us company-wide insight into what is happening in the various countries and enables our office in China to achieve more efficient procurement and planning.”

Barkel is satisfied with the performance of IFS Applications. “It is a stable product that we can manage well by ourselves. We have built up considerable competence over the course of time, which we are benefiting from now because we can handle roll-outs in other countries using our own staff. In certain cases, however, we still need help from IFS. In these urgent cases, our experience is that the IFS organization has the agility we require for us to arrive at a solution together.”

### BENEFITS

- Integrated information flows
- Group-wide insight into sales
- Agile solution that is easy to manage



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