

Standardised dispatching

by Fritz & Macziol, Germany

No longer operating solely in Belgium, limestone producer Lhoist has seen its operations grow throughout Europe and beyond. To maintain pace with this expansion, the company is rationalising its dispatch section in a multi-step process, which recently saw its German plants upgraded and is soon to be rolled out across more of its European operations.

Belgium-based Lhoist is one of the global leading manufacturers of limestone, dolomite and mineral products. Currently, the company's European operations are supported by five different dispatch solutions, but this situation is set to change as one standard dispatch system is currently being put in place in all its European plants.

A total of 11 cement plants operating under Lhoist affiliate Rheinkalk in Germany have recently migrated to Fritz & Macziol's VAS logistics system. The multi-stage project will also see the VAS V5 model implemented at a further 11 Lhoist Europe plants.

Standardising the dispatch process

"Within the Lhoist Group a total of five different IT logistic systems are currently in place. VAS allows the integration of new requirements with existing modules into the solution whereas other solutions would need a new programming effort," says Waldemar Bischoff, project manager from Lhoist.

Implementation of the system requires no installation or administration efforts by the customer. As the VAS V5 is a web-based solution, software is managed via a standard web browser.



Lhoist is one of the leading world producers of limestone, dolomite and mineral products and operates more than 90 facilities in 25 countries



Commenting on the benefits of the model, Mr Bischoff states: "VAS V5 also allows the tracking of all processes which is vital to us."

Speaking of system's ability to be integrated into a sizeable organisation, Marc Brida, manager sales and business development of Fritz and Macziol, highlights: "VAS works as an ERP and hardware-independent middleware that is compatible to all kinds of existing software and hardware, which facilitates the integration of the systems within a large company like Lhoist."

Scope of supply

Lhoist Europe will use the broad functionality of the VAS system for its European plants. The scope of supply includes nearly all the processes related to dispatch automation, including:

- truck entry and exit
- weighing
- loading and dispatch of bulk and bagged material for truck and rail delivery.

In addition, Lhoist will also use mobile loading terminals for its forklift and wheel loader fleet. Mobile VAS terminals are connected online to the dispatch solution, allowing drivers to use the functions from a vehicle's cabin. This speeds up the dispatch process and increases safety as drivers remain inside their vehicles.

Over the next few months, all 11 plants will be supported by different functionalities. Underlining the significance of the order, Mr Brida concludes: "... we are very happy that our success story also continues in the limestone industry with a global player like Lhoist."

