case study

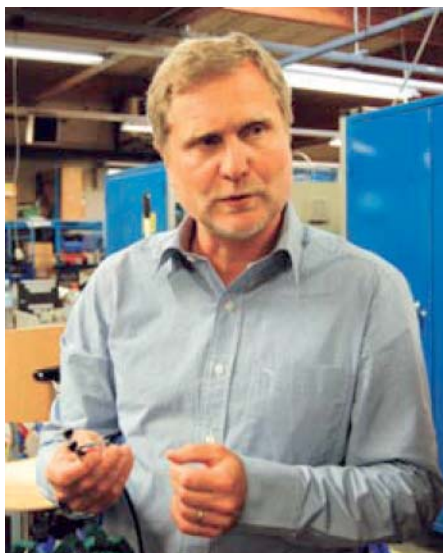## Belgium
Sheltered Workshops

"Timorousness for technology in our sector is unnecessary. Everything becomes far more easy for our disabled employees."

Bernard Samyn, Head of Personnel Department, relies on Protime

For fear of the millennium bug in 2000, the sheltered workshop Waak upgraded their personnel management software. "Looking back, it was a pre-empted blessing in disguise," says Bernard Samyn, Head of Personnel Department.

"We had to make a crucial choice and we still do not regret the decision we made."

Bernard Samyn,
head of Personnel Department

Who?
Waak Sheltered Workshop, non-profit association, founded in 1965.

What?
Mainly known as ISO certified supplier of electrical wiring and cable looms for private cars, lorries, household and industrial appliances (the so called Waak 1 division). Other activities include packing and mailing goods (ballasting-up, counting, sorting, packaging), gardening and plant nursery, manufacturing of cleaning products, lighting appliances and stainless steel kettles, metalworking and assembling.

Number of employees?
1,800 of whom 1,200 'disabled workers' (people with a work disability).

Info?
http://www.waak.be

The mission of Waak, situated in Kuurne, West Flanders, is to offer suitable work to as many people with a work disability as possible. The non-profit association realises their mission in a way you would not normally expect. Words such as 'just in time and sequential supply', a 'production process certified by the ISO 9002 quality system' and 'PPM standards' are common practice. "PPM standards stands for parts per million which refers to the maximum allowed margin of error," says Bernard Samyn, Head of Personnel Department. "The cables of car appliances have a PPM of 50 for example, which means that per one million, a maximum of fifty faulty cables may be supplied. Everybody involved with quality control will agree this is a very strict norm. This is only logical, as your product is used as the 'nervous system' of cars or lorries. As a result of a well thought-through approach, the complexity of the entire production process is reduced to a minimum and at the same time, increasingly secured where quality is concerned."

Crucial choices

Waak was looking for the same quality and precision when in 2000 it was trying to find a new supplier of time management systems. "We did our homework back then and had a look at what was available on the market" says Bernard Samyn looking back at that time. "The supplier of the then clocking-in machines sent a junior sales person who could not provide us with an answer to four out of five questions. Then, a Protime representative visited us, who we had come to know via the social secretariat SD Worx. He did have an eye for the crucial choices we had to make and eventually we purchased a Protime registration application in 1999 with a license for 1,500 employees, together with the salary application Blox.

Perfect integration

"The timorousness for state-of-the-art time management in the sheltered workshop sector is entirely unnecessary," says Bernard Samyn. "After all, the technology is extremely straightforward and user-friendly." The changeover from our own software to the Protime application, and therefore a Windows environment, was a small revolution in every way for the personnel department, he recalls. "It was like trading in your very first small and dilapidated car for a luxurious one. We did not really need the extra features and options the application offers but it was nice to see that they came as standard. Only a one-off changeover and updates of all old personnel files were required in the new system. Currently, 12 employees from the personnel department/social service work with Protime on a daily basis. The main advantage of Protime software for me is the flexibility and user-friendliness. We have a few employees in house, for example, who fully comprehend and understand the systematics of the program, but this knowledge is absolutely not required to, nearly intuitively, work with the application. It is difficult to measure how much time we gained from using the software application as our personnel volumes concurrently increased as well. We have gained most time in the data gathering process with regard to the payroll: if everything runs smoothly, we can start gathering the employee data at 10 am and will be finished by 11 am, and we are talking about 1,600 employees."

Take care of the future

Bernard Samyn likes to keep a finger on the pulse where new trends and possibilities for time management are concerned. "In the medium to long term, we will be looking into the possibility of replacing bar code scanning with electronic badges if this is necessary to prevent us from falling behind technologically," he says. "Besides, I am convinced we could gain even more time by moving to ProTeam (a module from the Protime Premium family which allows for the optimisation

The flexibility and user-friendliness of the time management software offers significant added value for us.

of personnel management, Ed.) Due to a lack of time, we are well aware of the fact that we do not get the most out of the Protime application. A few months ago, a new employee started work in the personnel department who will soon be given the time and space to gain an in-depth knowledge of Protime, in order to propose and implement adjustments and improvements. The new Protime software application version is able to offer many possibilities exporting reports into Excel for example, which is an extremely interesting feature for our service. As you can see: we rediscover Protime every day."

WAAK
Mensgericht Ondernemen