

Service contract ensures process accuracy

Outsourcing calibration helps Solvay meet customer expectations



Solvay is an advanced materials and specialty chemicals company. Solvay acquired Cytec and formed a global business unit to provide solutions for the manufacture of high-quality, high-performance and complex composite structures used in aerospace, automotive and oil & gas. Solvay Wrexham, UK, manufactures carbon fibre composites and structural adhesives for aerospace customers such as Boeing and Airbus.

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Ben Pine

Site Engineering and Capital Manager
Solvay Composite Materials



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The challenge Being able to rely on the accuracy and repeatability of their process instrumentation is vital for the engineers at Solvay Composite Materials in Wrexham. As well as the company having to comply with regulations governing the chemicals industry, their customers regularly carry out their own audits to ensure everything is up to scratch. “Particularly when you’re dealing with Airbus, Boeing, companies like that, they expect you to have full control of your processes,” explains Ben Pine, Site Engineering and Capital Manager. “We’ve got to be able to demonstrate time after time that the calibration is correct, that we’re making products exactly the same.”

As a result, reliable calibration of the instrumentation used on site is essential. In 2018, Solvay opened a second site in Wrexham, transferring adhesive production from one of their sites in the US, which led to an increase in process instrumentation and calibration demand.

The solution Endress+Hauser has had a relationship with Solvay for 25 years



Solvay Composite Materials, Wrexham, UK

to provide and maintain much of the instrumentation used on site. The service contract was extended in 2019 to incorporate the new adhesive facility, and an Endress+Hauser calibration engineer now spends two weeks every month at Solvay.

The company doesn’t schedule routine shutdowns for maintenance, so being able to rely on a mobile calibration service is a big advantage. “We’d never consider sending flowmeters off for calibration in a lab,” confirms Ben Pine, “because we’d have to have a spare here to keep the line running. Our inventory costs would go through the roof.”

The on-site support is complemented by the calibration management software CompuCal and the W@M Portal, Endress+Hauser’s asset management tool. “CompuCal flags up when an item is due for calibration,” explains Ben Pine. “It’s easy to use, and we’ve got all of our instruments and our certificates in there. It links through to the W@M Portal which tells us which Endress+Hauser products are now obsolete, so from a

maintenance perspective we know which products need replacing and what to replace them with.”

The benefits Outsourcing calibration to Endress+Hauser frees up the on-site engineers to deal with breakdowns and planned maintenance. “It’s one less stress for my life!” laughs Ben Pine. “Having the same person who comes to site every month is a real benefit because he knows the site, he knows our people, he follows our processes and he doesn’t need his hand held. I know that everything will be calibrated on time and there’ll be no obstacles or issues.”

The software helps to ensure that all standard operating procedures (SOPs) are followed and calibration records are easy to access. “When we have an audit, I can feel confident that we will be compliant,” Ben Pine says. “But the biggest benefit is the people. The calibration engineer does what he says he’s going to do, and our contracts manager has regular touch points and makes sure we’re happy. That relationship is fundamental for any contract. It’s not usual for me to recommend a company, but Endress+Hauser I would, and have.”



TCU temperature and flow monitoring system



CIP skid



Resin pump skid

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