

From SAP EAM to IFS Ultimo: A change with many challenges for Frespo



IFS Ultimo

Frespo supplies top-quality fresh potato products, both precooked and steam fresh, to the European foodservice market. Since September 2023, the potato facility has been in the hands of investment company Nimbus. Previously, the facilities and the organisation were both part of Aviko. After the split from Aviko, the name was changed to Frespo (Fresh Potato) and the systems had to be converted in a very short period of time. Aviko used SAP EAM as their maintenance management system and Frespo decided, after conducting thorough research, to use IFS Ultimo. We are talking to Karim Uarghe, Manager Maintenance & Projects in the production facility in Katwijk, who realised the migration from the SAP EAM system with Pontifexx over four months.

Karim has 18 years of experience and has fulfilled various roles during his 17 years with Aviko. Karim: "Before the decision was made to change from SAP EAM to IFS Ultimo, a comprehensive study was carried out. Microsoft Business Central was also considered, but this system does not have a TS module and was too limited for all the data from the Technical department. I was immediately enthusiastic about IFS Ultimo after seeing the demo; the package is straightforward and easy to learn."

The Frespo project team comprised Karim Uarghe, Lieke Wunderink-Peters and Marco Cornelissen.

Implementation and collaboration with Pontifexx

"Despite the fact that we knew what we needed, we also required specific expertise to carry out the implementation and migration. So, we needed to find an implementation partner. We felt immediately confident in Pontifexx as they presented a clear step-by-step approach and structure. The SAP knowledge within Pontifexx also helped us decide."

"We had a very clear view of how we wanted to set up the system and I did the necessary preliminary work. The complexity of the issue centres on how we input all the valuable information into a new system and how we can ensure that this new system is structured effectively and adopted easily."

About Frespo

Frespo delivers high quality fresh potato products, precooked and steam fresh, to the European Foodservice market. The company operates from Cuijk in the Netherlands. With over 30 years of experience, robust facilities and enthusiastic employees, Frespo is excited to deliver your next fresh potato solutions.



"It's not just a question of pumping in tons of data; we had to think carefully about how the current working methods could remain intact while connecting IFS Ultimo."

"Pontifexx and Hilco, in particular, carried this out very efficiently and effectively and, as far as I'm concerned, they should clone Hilco as he put so much added value into this project" tells Karim Uarghe, Manager Maintenance & Projects at Frespo.

Migration and results

"Hilco Luning from Pontifexx took care of the migration and built all of the necessary modules for us. It was a huge undertaking; just consider all the historical data, warehouse articles, prices, article suppliers, costs, quantities, TS work orders, purchase orders, maintenance plans with automatically generated work orders, and so on."

Luning: "And, if the migration was not enough, another huge challenge for Karim and his team was the planning. We started in November 2023 and went live in March 2024. This quick turn-around was only possible because the blueprint for SAP from Aviko was written very clearly. Now, around 30 colleagues are working with IFS Ultimo and we trained them with just one training session. We needed a few more sessions for the Technical Service."

"A careful plan and a dedicated team are vital for a smooth transition between systems."

Challenge for Pontifexx

Hilco adds: "The successful implementation of IFS Ultimo at Frespo, despite the tight deadline due to the acquisition of Aviko Cuijk by Frespo, was a huge achievement. It is staggering that the project team, comprising Karim Uarghe, Lieke Wunderink-Peters and Marco Cornelissen, was able to largely retain the processes, as defined in the SAP Blueprint. This demonstrates the importance of a careful plan and a dedicated team for a smooth transition between systems."

Find out more

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The biggest challenge was extracting the data out of SAP but, fortunately, Karim had the right tooling and expertise to make this happen.

The seamless migration which allowed key processes to remain unchanged undoubtedly contributed towards creating a stable base for the future. Laying a foundation like this is vital for the continuity of Frespo. It is clear that this project is a great example of effective change management and technological adjustments.

Acquisition by Peka Kroef

Karim explains that Frespo was taken over by potato processor Peka Kroef in March 2024. The takeovers have happened quickly, one after the other, but the team is very positive and feeling confident about the future. "The products fit together well and supplement one another. Karim is not yet clear about the consequences for the system, however. Peka Kroef also runs on Ultimo IFS and we will have to see how we can integrate and standardise the systems. He smiles as he explains that, in the coming weeks, they will organise meetings and review production capacity and then start making adjustments to the factory."

