Seepex Pumps up its Potential with Copia Automation

SEEPEX.
An Ingersoll Rand Business

Seepex, a leading worldwide specialist in pump technology and part of the Ingersoll Rand Group, knew they needed to find a way to efficiently write and manage code for a multitude of platforms. As a global supplier of mission-critical flow creation and industrial solutions, Seepex leads with a guiding principle aimed at finding solutions that help their customers get ahead, particularly by developing previously unheard-of solutions. They view the key to their success as their drive to work with customers to develop approaches that optimize their system, boost their productivity, and lower their operating costs. Within the pursuit of this goal, Seepex approached Copia.

"With Copia, we've adapted to market conditions and increased the agility of our business," Dr. Sebastian Rickers, Head of Electrical Engineering at Seepex, said. "Particularly, customers wanted us to be able to program PLCs (programmable logic controllers) on multiple platforms. This limitation was more than just an inconvenience—it was costing us business."

Industrial automation demands a controlled continuous flow of both resources and processes. No one knows this better than Seepex, who sells its progressive cavity (PC) pumps, pump systems, and controls to

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COPIA

a diverse range of manufacturing, including food and beverage, oil and gas, and environmental engineering. With a small, dedicated team of PLC programmers, Seepex provides custom code that keeps their PC pumps flowing. But with the many PLCs available in the market, Seepex soon found itself at a bottleneck. Their established methods had them developing in closed, proprietary vendor systems that limited their ability to collaborate and speed to innovate.

The Quest for a Solution

Determined to overcome this hurdle, Seepex harnessed their relationship with the University of Applied Sciences of Cologne. Their joint mission? To establish a single source of truth for the development and oversight of code for multiple PLC vendors. The solution would need to enable the development team to share code easily, work asynchronously, and provide a robust backup and recovery plan. It was during this search that they learned about the Copia Industrial DevOps Platform.

"When we heard about Copia, we realized they were the only ones who had a solution for a multi-vendor code repository," Dr. Rickers said, "This was the solution we needed and had been trying to create."

Seepex has consistently delivered innovative, positive outcomes for customers because of this ability to reach across the aisle to find new partners that amplify their impact. Their ongoing relationship with the University of Applied Sciences of Cologne is a testament to their belief in research, innovation, and collaboration to continually improve and scale their business.

A Smooth Transition

Implementing a new system can often be a daunting task. But for Seepex, the transition to Copia was surprisingly smooth.

The team's familiarity with Git-based systems gave them a head start, and with some basic training and support from Copia's customer success team, they were up and running in no time.

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"The implementation was quite easy," said Kai Seeberg-Kessner, electrical engineer and PLC programmer at Seepex. "We just had to set up the different repositories for each vendor, which only took a few hours of work."

Transforming Workflows

The impact of Copia on Seepex's operations was immediate and far-reaching. Gone were the days of decentralized code setups and manual synchronization between team members.

"Before Copia," Seeberg-Kessner recalls, "we had thousands of copies of PLC files. Now, with Copia, we have eliminated our duplicate code and rely on a single source of truth."

This centralization didn't just tidy up their codebase—it revolutionized their ability to collaborate. Team members can now work on the same code simultaneously, regardless of their location. Additionally, the service team gained direct access to the latest versions of the code, which freed developers from handling support requests.

"We can now break up the lifecycle management of our systems," said Dr. Rickers. "We're no longer forced to have the same person responsible for a project from cradle to grave. Copia has given us great flexibility and scalability."

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Expanding Horizons

The most significant impact, however, was on Seepex's business capabilities. With their newfound ability to work across multiple platforms, they could say "yes" to projects they previously had to turn down.

"We have now sold significantly more units that we would not have been able to sell if we did not have Copia," said Dr. Rickers. "Before 2017, we were selling a handful of units annually. Then we introduced our platform independent technology (PIT) concept in 2017 and Copia not long after. The combination of these changes has increased our output 3x on average over the last few years, with 2023 being our best year yet and 2024 continuing on that progress. We credit this to the technical advantage and adaptability that

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comes with these changes and the Industrial DevOps product and approach that comes with Copia, amplifying the impact of our workforce."

But it's not just about the numbers. The quality of work life for the team has improved dramatically. For example, Seeberg-Kessner, who previously had to juggle development and service requests, can now focus on his core responsibilities.

"I'm more available for commissioning and PLC programming, and I can pass on service responsibilities to other staff knowing they have all the documentation they need in Copia," said Seeberg-Kessner.

Looking to the Future

As Seepex continues to grow and evolve, Copia remains a crucial part of their toolkit. The platform's ability to render changes visually has become a favorite feature among the team, making code reviews more efficient and effective.

"I highly recommend Copia, especially if you have colleagues in remote locations," said Seeberg-Kessner. "You can all work at the same time on the same base code. That's the biggest advantage for me."

For Seepex, Copia Automation hasn't just solved a technical challenge—it's opened up new possibilities, streamlined their operations, and positioned them for future growth in an increasingly competitive environment. And that has the team at Seepex pumped!

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Challenges:

- Customer needed multi-vendor platform for PLC code development
- Lost business opportunities due to platform limitations
- Needed to improve code sharing and version control

Solutions:

- Implemented the Copia Industrial DevOps Platform as the single source of truth for all PLC code management
- Utilize Copia for best-in-class Git-based version control, project collaboration, and back-up/disaster recovery features

Benefits:

- Ability to support code development across multiple PLC brands, increasing speed and significantly accelerating sales opportunities
- Un-siloed projects, which enhanced team collaboration and streamlined handoffs between departments, eliminating dependency on any one person
- Improved version control and visualization of code changes, making it clear what, when, why, and how code changed
- Moved from thousands of code files to one single source of truth that tracks changes and always shows the most up-to-date version of the code

Meet with the Copia team

Visit copia.io to learn how you can implement the Copia Industrial DevOps Platform in your manufacturing business. To learn more about Seepex or to request their services, please visit seepex.com or reach out to info@seepex.com.