



Interview with Christophe Piasco,
Head of the Research and Innovation Division at Aubrilam

“MES, a true leverage for obtaining CE certification”



Substantial time
and productivity
gains



Visual management
at the center of the
production plant



Interconnection between
the ERP, MES and Time and
Activity Management solutions

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Carefully tracing production
- ✓ Being the first on the market to obtain a CE certification
- ✓ Gaining access to a 360° view of production

Aubrilam

Historically, Aubrilam is the **specialist in lighting columns and wooden poles** for lighting bollards. Based in Clermont-Ferrand, the company of 70 employees now offers more than 300 metal and wood products for outdoor areas (benches, bollards, lighting points, etc.). Building on its successful performance in France, the company then started its global expansion as an exporter, thanks in particular to its partnership over 25 years with the McDonald's Group. In order to continuously improve and obtain the CE certification, the SME decided to acquire and implement an MES (Manufacturing Execution System) solution to facilitate the management of its production activities.

Christophe Piasco, Head of the Research and Innovation division at Aubrilam, has offered feedback on the deployment of this solution through an interview.



Objective: Obtaining the CE Certification

“We have always managed the company’s production with our ERP. However, we were manually transferring all data (schedules, reports, etc.) in the ERP, which was not optimal. In order to gain access to the international market, **we have decided to obtain the CE certification.** This marking indicates that a product complies with European requirements. To do so, we needed a software that could ensure **traceability of all stages of production** of our products: from inbound logistics to machining to quality control. This process involves the collection of a tremendous amount of data in real time, which would have been impossible if done manually. We have therefore decided to implement an MES solution.

We first drafted a highly detailed statement of work with a scoring system for our various criteria. We then launched a tender, while benchmarking the market. Three software editors were left in our shortlist. Beyond an IT provider, we were looking for a genuine partner, **able to assist us in the field and understand our concerns and challenges.** Alpha-3i stood out very clearly! Promptly, Alpha-3i’s teams visited the plant, discussed the project with us and recommended CIMAG-Production, a solution that fully met our needs.”

No Room for Error...

“In order to obtain the CE certification, we had to provide records of four months of production traceability. Our deadline was April, therefore the MES tool was to be operational by January. **There was no room for error, otherwise we would have had to wait another four years before being allowed to submit our application again!** We have therefore appointed an internal project manager to carefully monitor the project throughout deployment. It was the right decision because deployment went very well!

We finally obtained the certification, which has given us a real competitive advantage internationally, as we are the only ones on this market to be CE certified. **Beyond an IT project, it was a real strategic challenge for Aubrilam.”**

BENEFITS



- ✓ CE certification thanks to the MES
- ✓ Obtaining accurate and precise KPIs
- ✓ Visual management in the workshop
- ✓ Productivity and reliability gains



For more than 20 years, Alpha-3i has offered state-of-the-art **software and hardware solutions** for business management in three main areas:

- ✓ Workshop management, real-time monitoring of production operations, scheduling - **CIMAG-Production**
- ✓ Time management - **CIMAG-Attendance**
- ✓ Access control - **CIMAG-Access**

Simplified HR Management

“The project did not stop there! We subsequently deployed a Time and Activity Management tool, which handles activities that had so far been managed manually in our ERP. **Our production is subject to substantial variations in activity.** Our operators are contracted to work 35 hours per week, but may be working 28 to 46 hours a week depending on production needs. They are provided with a modulation counter to adjust their working time. Managing this process manually was extremely difficult. Today, we have a reliable tool to promptly manage our activity and HR flows.

Furthermore, the integration of the two MES and HR solutions allows us to manage our activity, organize schedules in advance more effectively, and gain access to **highly interesting KPIs (Key Performance Indicators).**”

A More Responsive and Reliable Production

“Initially, we deployed CIMAG-Production to achieve better traceability of our products, however, today, we are using all the features available to us! We have initiated a **visual management approach in the workshop** to ensure that operators have access to the progress of the various projects and their schedule as soon as they get on a machine. Furthermore, we can more easily anticipate peak activity and the availability of resources. Our ERP is connected with our MES solution, and work orders are automatically available to production managers, which prevents errors during manual data entry. In a few words, **our production is now reactive and reliable.**

As our production process consumes a great deal of energy, going forward, we would like to implement an energy MES to optimize our resources with respect to our needs. And Alpha-3i will support and assist us...”

-- **Christophe Piasco,**
Head of the Research and Innovation Division at Aubrilam