



REMOTE SERVICES ENABLE SUCCESSFUL SUMMER SHUTDOWN FOR SWEDISH VENEER MANUFACTURER PLYFA

With Covid-19 drastically restricting global mobility, Plyfa had to find a solution for planning and executing a summer shutdown for their veneer factory. Benefiting from a long and close collaboration, Plyfa and Raute agreed on remote services that resulted in a successful summer shutdown.

Plyfa Plywood AB is a Swedish veneer manufacturer founded in 1928. With 60% of production destined for export and main markets in Sweden, Germany and Austria, Plyfa is an international player in the veneer industry. In recent years, the company has made significant investments in its machinery, including installing Raute production lines in 2007.



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Covid-19 disturbs regular maintenance visits by Raute

The coronavirus pandemic in early 2020 placed severe restrictions on global mobility. As Raute's maintenance technicians weren't allowed to move freely between Finland and Sweden, there was a need to find another way to serve Plyfa and define the tasks to be done during the summer shutdown.

Plyfa aims for a high operating rate, which usually only leaves the summer holiday season for larger maintenance operations. This extensive operation requires a lot of planning and accurate data analyses that have traditionally been performed onsite.

Remote services tackle the lack of mobility

Raute solved some of Plyfa's maintenance requirements with remote services. Even though they had a service agreement in place before the pandemic, the new situation required upscaling the earlier service offering.

Raute developed a remote inspection service where a specific checklist to define the needs for the upcoming shutdown was created, along with the instructions on how to perform the necessary inspections. "Online support meetings with Raute enabled our maintenance technicians to carry out extensive condition checks and create an action plan prior to the summer maintenance break," says **Ulf Norling**, Maintenance Manager at Plyfa.

Results from remote inspections and experience from past maintenance executions and shutdowns were used to define the required tasks and spare parts. This way, we could evaluate the machinery's overall condition and ensure that the right spare parts were available at the right time for each task of the shutdown.

"The remote process we created wouldn't have been possible without the mutual commitment to finding a way to execute the required maintenance tasks. Remote work requires close collaboration and trust between the participating companies and personnel," says **Juha Rantalainen**, Head of Services at Raute.



Remote services improved Plyfa's own maintenance capability

The summer shutdown was completed successfully and on time. Thanks to the new streamlined remote services, working remotely can also decrease unplanned downtime and thus increase Plyfa's production efficiency in the future. Remote service is a cost-effective tool that can be a solution, at least partly, for planned and unplanned downtime.

The remote service was a success for the summer shutdown, and it also improved Plyfa's capability and knowledge about the machinery's technical details.

"We reviewed machine status and production performance in MillSIGHTS, Raute's data capturing management and information system. We've had access to measurement data before, but Raute analyzed and presented process data in ways that can provide us with a good benchmark," says Mr. Norling.

Exploring analytics enables future optimization schemes

The Covid-19 pandemic has further strengthened Raute and Plyfa's already tight-knit collaboration, with Raute turning from a service provider to a more holistic partner.

The new methods Plyfa adopted in the remote process open fresh avenues for production optimization in the future. MillSIGHTS data was used to define the production efficiency before and after the summer shutdown, and this data can also be utilized for analyzing new ways to improve production efficiency.

"Plyfa has a clear target for developing their operations, both production and maintenance, further and we will support them by supplying cost-effective solutions as a service partner," Juha Rantalainen concludes.