

## QAD Production Scheduler Streamlines Scheduling, Lowers Costs for Industrial Manufacturer

### The Company: Forward-Looking Global Manufacturer with Family Roots

A.J. Antunes & Co. manufactures industrial controls, foodservice equipment and water filtration systems, distributing to customers all over the world. Headquartered in Carol Stream, Illinois, the company was founded in 1955 by August J. Antunes and is still owned and operated by the Antunes family.

A.J. Antunes was established as a manufacturer's sales representative distributing industrial products across the mid-western United States. Soon after the company started, the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) issued a new standard for industrial oven controls that would require many of the company's customers to re-design and retool their controls. A.J. Antunes took the leap into manufacturing, designing and producing a switch that satisfied the new UL requirements—saving their customers the costs of re-engineering and re-creating controls themselves.

Today, global sales and distribution are critical to the ongoing success and growth of the company. Well over 30 percent of sales revenues come from international business, and this percentage continues to grow. To enhance its global presence, A.J. Antunes & Co. recently opened a new facility in Suzhou, China.

### The Challenge: Manual Scheduling Processes and Proliferating Inefficiencies

Simply defined, production scheduling is: The process of compiling sets of instructions that tell a manufacturing facility what to make, when, and on which pieces of equipment. What production schedulers do is find the balance between demand, available capacity and supply that will best satisfy customer expectations.

To consistently meet today's high-pressure manufacturing expectations—and keep customers happy—schedulers need tools and applications that allow real-time visibility and quick access to detailed scheduling information. Without these tools, schedulers must often sort through a multitude of reports and inquiries, and review multiple screens to create a production schedule. Most schedulers work around the problem by building their own

intricate arrangements of spreadsheets to consolidate the many pieces of information they need.

The production schedulers at A.J. Antunes faced the same work-around issues: Finding it cumbersome to pull critical data from multiple report and inquiry screens, the schedulers resorted to a complex, manually managed system of spreadsheets.

The schedulers didn't have visibility into real-time information, and the resulting manually-created schedules couldn't provide up-to-date demand, supply and inventory data. The lack of visibility into critical scheduling data

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compounded scheduling issues, and the proliferating inefficiencies resulting from the manual scheduling approach created incremental costs throughout the production process; including:

- Excess inventory purchased and held
- Long production lead times
- Underutilized or over-scheduled capacity

The production schedulers were growing frustrated with the amount of time they had to spend creating and updating schedules, as well as their inability to optimize scheduling and maximize use of resources with the tools at hand.

### The Solution: Visibility and Streamlined Processes Enhance Efficiencies

Since its founding, A.J. Antunes has maintained consistent growth by being forward-looking and finding ways to stay ahead of the curve. The company has a long and successful partnership with QAD, and currently runs QAD MFG/PRO eB2.1.

So, when QAD Production Scheduler became available, decision makers at A.J. Antunes saw the opportunity to help the company's production schedulers dramatically improve the production scheduling process—while also improving production efficiencies and driving down costs. And, since QAD Production Scheduler integrates with QAD MFG/PRO, implementation was quick and easy.

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With QAD Production Scheduler, the schedulers have the tools in hand to quickly respond to fluctuations in demand and supply, and make the best use of capacity and inventory. All the information they need is visible on one screen, eliminating the need to spend time searching through multiple reports, inquiries and maintenance screens.

The schedulers have near real-time visibility to critical scheduling data, such as demand, capacity and quantity-on-hand. Event-based, visual alerts quickly point to potential problem areas, allowing the schedulers to easily focus on what's most important. And, scheduling simulation capabilities allow schedulers to balance capacity and demand before committing the production schedule. Once the production schedule is committed, it is sent back to QAD MFG/PRO, where the appropriate schedule maintenance menu is automatically updated.

“The power of QAD Production Scheduler is in its ability to provide the user with a clear vision of all of the factors that must be considered in the scheduling process, as well as a simple interface for the input and implementation of schedules and updates,” says Mike Ferrusquia, director of manufacturing for A.J. Antunes. He adds, “The design of the user functionality is excellent and there is no question that it serves its intended purpose very effectively.”

### **The Benefits: Efficient Scheduling Improves Overall Plant Performance**

The implementation of QAD Production Scheduler created immediate results for A.J. Antunes and its production schedulers.

The tool was simple to implement and required minimal training. “From a user perspective, it is well designed. The product is easy to use and understand,” says Ferrusquia. He adds, “It enables our staff to review current schedules more frequently, to identify issues and respond to changing conditions.”

“Cumbersome scheduling processes lead to ‘over-scheduling’ and make schedulers reluctant to perform scheduling updates,” says Bill Hickey, executive vice president at A.J. Antunes. “This leads to excessive MRP and inventory.” The new software makes it easy for the scheduler to maintain accurate schedules on a daily basis—this ensures accurate information throughout the entire enterprise planning cycle.

“The system is great. It has reduced the amount of reports to run and eliminated the different screens I had to go to. Right in front of me, I have all the information I need to load schedules. The tools are there to eliminate overtime. It has freed up a lot of my time—my scheduling process before was two to three hours per day. Now, with the QAD Production Scheduler, it's taking me 10–20 minutes. This has been a great tool for me,” says Ferrusquia.

Unchained from cumbersome manual processes, the production schedulers at A.J. Antunes are liberated to be far more efficient and productive. “The input I have from our staff is that QAD Production Scheduler reduces the time required for scheduling by as much as 75 percent,” says Ferrusquia.

“The visibility QAD Production Scheduler provides has also enabled our staff to schedule more effectively, by providing a clearer vision of factors that must be con-

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sidered in the scheduling process,” says Ferrusquia. He adds, “Since the people who use the product find it much more convenient to use, QAD Production Scheduler enhances their work experience and morale.”

“The QAD Production Scheduler is right on target. The interface is extremely well-designed and intuitive, and shows extraordinary expertise in production management. QAD clearly demonstrates their ‘passion for manufacturing’ in this product. It has been very gratifying to be a

part of the implementation of a software application that has produced such an improvement for our production staff. Experiences like this are the most rewarding part of Information Systems Management,” says Donald Springer, information systems manager at A.J. Antunes.

***... It is clear that the team responsible for the design of QAD Production Scheduler has demonstrated both in-depth knowledge of the intricacies of the production scheduling process, and an exceptional talent for the design of a user interface that provides comprehensive information, is intuitive and easy to use.”***

*Mike Ferrusquia, Director of Manufacturing, A.J. Antunes*

The significant increase in scheduling efficiency also makes the entire production process leaner. With QAD Production Scheduler, capacity can be managed to optimum efficiency, WIP is reduced, lead times are minimal and inventory costs can be slashed substantially.

### **The Future: Schedulers Liberated to be More Strategic**

A.J. Antunes and its production schedulers look forward to ongoing improvements in the scheduling process, and the gains that result from more efficient production scheduling.

“QAD MFG/PRO Advanced Repetitive has been a great tool that we have put to good use since 1997. It was a main business driver for our selection of QAD MFG/PRO. QAD Production Scheduler makes it even more effective, and brings us to the ‘next level’ in production management,” says Hickey.

Adds Springer, “I believe that the global picture of scheduling parameters provided by QAD Production Scheduler will allow our scheduling staff to respond more quickly to changes in conditions that impact existing schedules, and allow the staff to respond more quickly and easily to these factors early in the scheduling process.”

*Story prepared by A.J. Antunes & Co. in cooperation with QAD.*

## Benefits

### Key Benefits of QAD Production Scheduler

- Integrated with QAD MFG/PRO
- Optimizes scheduling accuracy
- Provides real-time visibility of completed production
- Significantly reduces production scheduling effort
- Visual alerts for capacity and item availability
- Helps decrease the direct material planning effort
- Enhances customer service

## Highlights

### Company

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>Company Name</b> | A.J. Antunes  |
| <b>Industry</b>     | Manufacturing and Distribution of Industrial Products                 |
| <b>Products</b>     | Industrial Controls, Food Service Equipment, Water Filtration Systems |

### Solution

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>QAD Solutions</b>   | QAD Production Scheduler<br>QAD MFG/PRO eB2.1           |
| <b>Hardware</b>        | HP-UX   |
| <b>Languages</b>       | English   |
| <b>Sites</b>           | QAD Production Scheduler: one<br>QAD MFG/PRO eB2.1: two |
| <b>Time to Benefit</b> | Immediate   |

### Results

- Reduced scheduling time by as much as 75 percent
- Eliminated need to manage schedules manually
- Improved inventory management
- Significantly reduced lead times
- Enhanced overall production process
- Enabled customer service improvements



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