



AIMING FOR OPTIMAL EFFICIENCY

WEDGE FACILITATES OPE ACTIVITIES WITH CUSTOMERS

Photo: Riku Isohella

Comprehensive production efficiency and customer benefits is the idea behind the Overall Production Efficiency (OPE) service provided by ANDRITZ, a global leader in providing technology and services for the pulp and paper industry. Intensive dialogue with customers, and a focus on the overall results are key, whether the matter at hand is small tweaks to the process or significant enhancements to the customer's equipment. Savcor's process diagnosis tool, Wedge, assists in this dialogue.

– It is a great advantage if the customer already uses Wedge. When we both use the same tool and view the same parameters, we can be sure that we are speaking the same language, says **Jari Kapanen**, OPE Product Manager at ANDRITZ.

A CLEAR OPERATING METHOD

ANDRITZ PULP & PAPER introduced the OPE concept in its operations in Finland in 2003. The main interest group on OPE contracts are pulp and paper mills, from Finland to Chile, Russia, and Austria, where the company is headquartered, so basically from across the globe.

– Contract customers give us positive feedback about our structured method to define Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to improve their processes. The benefit gained by the customer is always a top priority. Good end results are not achieved without dialogue, Kapanen says.

A development team with members from both ANDRITZ and the customer organisation is established early in the OPE process for maximum collaboration. The objectives are defined together, and if the customer's focus shifts along the way, priorities are adjusted.

– For example, the price of pulp fluctuates depending upon global demand. During a time of high prices, the goal is to maximize production capacity while keeping costs in line. Therefore, we have to have a fairly deep understanding of our customer's core business operations, Kapanen says.

A TOOL FOR TOUGH SITUATIONS

Wedge has helped the ANDRITZ team solve a number of difficult issues at customer mills. According to Kapanen, Wedge offers good usability and is well-suited as a tool for process specialists.



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OPE Product Manager, ANDRITZ

– Today, a lot of information is available and gathered, but what is also needed is a tool to mine and analyze this data. Wedge has a good reporting feature. An effective summary report is important when analyzing and solving problems. When the report highlights deviations, these issues are easier to focus on and address, Kapanen says.

Kapanen himself has been using Wedge on a regular basis since 2014, but first learned of the tool while studying at university. The Wedge process diagnostics tool is being used in many customer organisations.

– When you are looking for the fundamental reason for an issue in the production process, Wedge is really good at listing candidates. When a customer is also already using Wedge, we can compare our production reports with the mill's reports to reach conclusions regarding the problem. This enables us to spend more time on correcting the problem and less time on troubleshooting, Kapanen says.

SAVINGS IN THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

At the Stora Enso Veitsiluoto mill, Operations Manager **Pasi Pigg** uses the Wedge process diagnostics tool almost daily. He plots trends and draws up diagrams based on the information received.

– Preprocessing of data is a handy feature, and making one's own calculations is relatively easy. There is not much time to prepare in-depth analyses while you work, but Wedge does all that for me quickly and effectively, Pigg says.

Various production areas at the Veitsiluoto mill have been utilizing ANDRITZ OPE services for approximately three years. According to Pigg, cost effectiveness and production efficiency have improved. For example, the runnability of the digester has improved, and washing losses in the fiberline have decreased. This saves money in the bleaching process by reducing the amount of chemicals required. Energy savings have also been achieved in the evaporation plant.

– Over the years, the number of personnel at mills has decreased, and certain skills are no longer available in-house. So, the experience and insight offered by an external partner help us gain a better understanding of our processes. Systematic OPE activities have had a positive impact on our company's operations.

A SELF-SUFFICIENT UNIT

The Veitsiluoto mill currently produces 952,000 tons of paper each year. Two production lines manufacture fine paper and one makes coated magazine paper. Pulp produced at the site is used directly as the furnish for the company's paper machines.

– We also operate our own sawmill, which produces 160,000 solid cubic metres of sawn timber per year. Sawmill chips are used in pulp production, while the bark and sawdust are fuels for our boilers. Running the daily operations of a large integrated mill like this is a lot of work. Development and improvement projects can sometimes take a backseat. Luckily, we have Wedge and the OPE activities to assist us, Pigg says. ■



Pasi Pigg, Operations Manager Stora Enso
Photo: Taisto Saari.