

CASE STUDY

BeanTown Chemical Reduces Waste and Achieves GHS Compliance With CODESOFT

Solution: CODESOFT

Partner: ValuTrack

Industry: Chemical

Background

BeanTown Chemical is a chemical manufacturing and supply company based in Hudson, NH. Founded in 2014 by two chemical industry veterans, the company's long-term goal is to become one of the top research chemical suppliers in the world. BeanTown Chemical produces and distributes research chemical products for pharmaceutical companies and academic institutions in sizes ranging from milliliters and milligrams to bulk orders.

As a start-up, BeanTown Chemical needed to implement an entire barcode labeling system that could accommodate over 7,000 products and over 5,500 unique chemicals and easily translate from its New Hampshire production facility to another facility that launched in China in 2015. Additionally, BeanTown Chemical required a system that would allow it to meet Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) standards that the U.S. government mandated compliance by June 1, 2015.

"We had to make sure we had a system in place that could handle the chemical hazard phrases and pictograms. We wanted to be GHS compliant well before June 1," said Aaron Frederick, General Manager of BeanTown Chemical.

In addition to needing an entirely new barcode labeling system that enabled it to comply with GHS standards, BeanTown Chemical was looking for an affordable solution that could meet its complex needs and would not require a significant investment in expensive specialty printers. BeanTown Chemical also needed an interface that would be easy for its production staff to learn and manage.

Challenges

- ✓ Setting up a brand new barcode labeling system for over 7,000 products and over 5,500 distinct chemicals
- ✓ Achieving GHS compliance in advance of impending deadline
- ✓ Finding an affordable solution for complex barcode label design printing needs
- ✓ Gaining the capability to easily print a variety of different label sizes

Results

- ✓ Entire barcode labeling system implemented and functional in less than one month
- ✓ Full compliance with GHS labeling requirements several months ahead of deadline
- ✓ CODESOFT barcode labeling software increased staff efficiency by 10%, and completely eliminated wasted label stock

With over 40 years of combined experience and knowledge acquired running another research chemical company, Frederick and BeanTown Chemical President Barry Singelais understood that barcode labeling is one of the most complicated and important aspects of the chemical manufacturing and supply industry. They knew that changing industry requirements necessitated the creation and management of thousands of different barcode labels.

With the deadline for compliance with GHS standards on the horizon, those requirements were only going to grow more complex. In their previous company, Frederick and Singelais used very expensive printers and a costly custom barcode label printing system. With limited resources, they also needed to find a partner that could provide a turnkey solution to develop all of their label designs, install the label printing software and label printers, and provide training and support to meet their tight timeframe. They also needed a barcode labeling system that would function just as effectively as what they were accustomed to, but at a fraction of the cost.

Since BeanTown Chemical produces over 7,000 products and over 5,500 unique chemicals, each coming in two or three sizes (with over half classified as hazardous), reaching GHS compliance was bound to be especially complex. GHS standards establish an elaborate system of phrases and pictograms that need to be included on each chemical's individual barcode label. As some of BeanTown Chemical's products are sold in small bottles, many of its labels would need an extensive amount of information to be printed onto labels as small as 1 inch by 3 inches. Fitting multiple pictograms and phrases onto such tiny labels would prove to be challenging. Additionally, BeanTown Chemical had its product and label data in an ERP system and a SQL server. Due to all these challenges and requirements, BeanTown Chemical needed a flexible, robust barcode labeling system.

"Labeling is one of the most daunting projects you can have in the business. There are a lot of regulations," Singelais said. "It is very difficult to find a product that will allow you to do it efficiently and affordably because there are certain requirements for color, where data should be placed, what the pictograms should look like and how many to display, depending on the hazard."

Solution

BeanTown Chemical contacted TEKLYNX because of their position in the barcode label design software space. TEKLYNX then connected them with ValuTrack, TEKLYNX premier business partner.

Dave Janelle, ValuTrack's Regional Sales Manager, worked closely with Frederick and Singelais to find a solution that was flexible enough to handle laser and inkjet printers, as well as the ability to easily switch between different label sizes. After talking to them about their industry and requirements, he recommended CODESOFT, a product that had proven successful for many customers. He also suggested they purchase Epson ColorWorks C3500 and C831 Inkjet Label Printers, as they would be fully compatible with CODESOFT, were reasonably priced and capable of printing the color labels required by GHS.

"We're very pleased with the product. It's an area of the business that's extremely important. It has been great to find the whole solution between ValuTrack and TEKLYNX CODESOFT. It's really done a great job for us".

*-Barry Singelais, President,
BeanTown Chemical*

Before they ultimately chose CODESOFT, Frederick and Singelais continued to explore their options, including a labeling system their previous company had used, but that solution proved to be too costly, complicated and inefficient. They also explored barcode labeling software solutions that were tied to specific printers, but found that those would not be flexible enough for their needs. Additionally, they explored solutions that did not offer continuous label printing, and determined that those also were inadequate.

Once they had explored all of their options, Frederick and Singelais determined that the CODESOFT solution and the services provided by ValuTrack were the best fit for them. "There are so many individual components of GHS. Many packages we found could do 10 out of 12 of the components, but we weren't finding a lot that could do all 12," Singelais said. "CODESOFT could, and that's why we chose it." They then entrusted Janelle and the ValuTrack team to help them implement BeanTown Chemical's entire barcode labeling operation.

ValuTrack delivered their Epson ColorWorks C3500 and C831 Inkjet Label Printers and began training BeanTown Chemical's staff on how to use CODESOFT. ValuTrack also wrote a routine that linked the software to their access database and showed them how to set up the proper hazard codes from their Safety Data Sheets (SDS) needed for GHS compliance. Those codes had to translate into the real universal phrase required for GHS compliance. CODESOFT was able to handle the highly complex coding system that determined which phrases and pictograms would appear on each label. To save BeanTown Chemical money on label costs, ValuTrack also helped them set up their Epson ColorWorks C3500 and C831 Inkjet Label Printers for continuous label printing, reducing the number of different label stocks they needed to purchase.

Once the implementation process started, ValuTrack was able to get BeanTown Chemical's entire barcode labeling system up and running in less than a month. "We don't have any complaints, that's for sure," Singelais said of the implementation process. "The process was pretty seamless and better than we expected."

Results

In CODESOFT, BeanTown Chemical has found a barcode labeling software solution that meets its complex labeling needs for over 7,000 products and over 5,500 unique chemicals. The company is now fully GHS-compliant with its ability to design and print information and pictograms on labels of various sizes. The font sizes and pictograms on its labels automatically resize depending on the size of the label. The software is able to handle all of the fonts the company uses and accommodate all of the various special characters required. BeanTown Chemical's employees find the software easy to operate, especially its ability to create label templates. With all of the labels created up front, the possibility of human error on the production floor is all but eliminated. Once the company is ready to begin production in China, the setup will only require shipping a single laptop with the software preinstalled.

Additionally, BeanTown Chemical is able to do all of its color label printing on just a few reasonably priced Epson ColorWorks C3500 and C831 Inkjet Label Printers, resulting in vibrant color labels that do not smudge.

KEY RESULT

The launch of a complete barcode labeling system for over 7,000 products and over 5,500 unique chemicals while increasing efficiencies and achieving GHS labeling compliance months ahead of the deadline.

With continuous label printing speed, the company has limited the number of different label stocks it needs to buy and has eliminated label waste. BeanTown Chemical estimates that using CODESOFT has also reduced the amount of time its staff has to dedicate to label printing by 10% compared to the system Frederick and Singelais used at their previous company.

BeanTown Chemical has even discovered some unexpected benefits to using CODESOFT, such as the ability to print shipping labels that meet U.S. Department of Transportation requirements for labeling chemicals in transit. The barcode labeling software is able to interact with an entirely different access database than the one that the company uses for GHS-compliant labels.

Frederick and Singelais are confident they have found the right partners in ValuTrack and TEKLYNX. While the company does not currently have labeling requirements beyond chemical products and shipping labeling, they plan to use ValuTrack and TEKLYNX if their needs expand into other areas.

BeanTown Chemical estimates that as the company continues to use CODESOFT, the benefits will keep adding up. "The more labeling we do, the more we'll save," Singelais said.

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