



Arista Tubes

Improving the product development business process
through Outlook-integrated workflow



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Company Profile: Arista Tubes

Arista Tubes is a UK-based manufacturer of plastic seamless tubes for cosmetics, personal care, toiletries and pharmaceutical markets. They are the largest manufacturer of tubes in the UK and cater to the specialty packaging needs of globally reputed cosmetics, personal care and pharmaceuticals majors in Europe. The company has an integrated manufacturing facility at Stevenage, located 30 miles north of London, which utilizes state-of-the-art technology employing efficient manufacturing and process tools such as Six Sigma and Lean.

Founded in the early 1920s as the Flexile Metal Company in Holloway, London, to manufacture lead tubes, it moved into aluminum tube manufacture a few decades later.

A move to Stevenage in the early 1960s saw the start of plastic tube production, under the name of Flexitainers. In 1991, the business was acquired by Courtaulds and in December 1998, after a management buy out, the company was renamed Arista Tubes. In August 2004, Arista was acquired by Essel Propack, the world's largest manufacturer of laminated tubes.

The Challenge

Arista develops several hundred new tubes every year and each variant is unique. This business process is managed by a team of Account Managers through a largely paper-based New Product Development (NPD) system. The number of stages in each NPD can vary from about 5 to 30, depending on the complexity of the tube specification, and typically involves over 20 individuals within the company. A single NPD can take weeks to complete and, due to the lack of automation in the paper-based process, it is difficult to determine how many projects are ongoing, at what stage each is at, and which projects have the highest priority.

Due to this lack of visibility and the difficulty of managing the NPD process, Arista's Customer Services Manager, Roger Barton, looked for a system that would allow better control of the NPD process. He identified the following requirements:

- The ability to communicate the "big picture" to all involved in the NPD process (i.e. what does the priority list look like?).
- Better management of deadlines through advanced notification, with reminders sent if a deadline has been missed which would help reduce NPD lead-times.
- Move from a paper-based system to an electronic form-based process with attachments.
- A process mapping facility that would allow the workflow to be amended in the event of changes to the NPD process.
- Good reporting capabilities.

In addition, the following systems-based requirements were identified:

- Low administration overhead.
- Integration with the existing e-mail system.
- Based on mainstream technology to reduce risk of future integration issues and minimize training requirements.
- Central server-based database with minimal duplication of data.

The Solution: TeamScope

Arista established a number of criteria that needed to be met and from these, looked at a variety of workflow solutions ranging from “cheap and cheerful” through “mid-range” to “utopia”. Many of these products were overly simple and lacked the required features, or were very complex in terms of implementation and administration and were extremely expensive.

TeamScope's TeamWork Workflow provided the features that Arista was looking for, at a very competitive price. In addition, TeamWork met the goal of seamless integration with their existing Microsoft Outlook and Exchange Server implementation. Because TeamWork is based on Outlook forms, training requirements are kept to a minimum, as users are already familiar with the software.

"By integrating with our existing Microsoft Outlook and Exchange deployment, our users are able to start using TeamWork quickly and with minimal training. For the first time, everyone participating in the New Product Development process will know which products have the highest priority and can see where each product is in the development process. We are sure that TeamWork will dramatically improve our productivity!"

**Roger Barton
Customer Services Manager
Arista Tubes**

TeamScope Benefits

TeamScope Software develops and markets Business Process Automation and other collaboration software based on Microsoft's Outlook and Exchange Server technology. Utilizing the advanced data integration and communication capabilities of these key Microsoft platforms, TeamScope creates products that accelerate business processes and dramatically enhance individual and group productivity.

Fundamentally, TeamScope's software products augment and extend Outlook and Exchange to supply dedicated business solutions for broad classes of business needs, such as integrated Business Process Automation (BPA) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

TeamScope was founded in 1999 by software industry veterans Phil Seeman and Paul Woodworth. The founding principle of the company is to make work easier to do and to increase management effectiveness in daily business operations. While many software products offered in the market today are installed as separate applications, TeamScope's unique approach is to create advances within the Outlook/Exchange environment itself. By doing the extra work to tightly integrate these systems, TeamScope solutions streamline any business function that incorporates email communication, contact management, or task coordination.