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Newsletter 12/2010

BMW Launches New Plant in China in 7 Months

With demand for German cars at an all time high in China, German car manufacturers are racing to ramp up their local production capabilities while keeping their budgets under control, charging ahead, while keeping a light foot on the brake. One company that has successfully risen to the challenge is BMW.

Though the company already had plans to move to a new plant in China for the production of its next model, local demand was rapidly growing for its current BMW 3Series, and BMW needed to increase manufacturing capacities immediately. The situation called for an interim site, one that could be completed within an ambitious timeframe of just seven months.

To meet this aggressive goal, BMW called on a trusted partner with proven experience in the Chinese marketplace: Ingenics. Together, BMW and Ingenics focused on: planning streamlined processes; defining staff, equipment, and structural building needs; developing individual training concepts to adequately prepare local staff for the tasks ahead; monitoring the implementation; and finally, supporting the launch. The project required maximum performance at every level, while balancing seamless adaptation to local requirements and conditions. Key tasks included: line side planning; conceiving material delivery; creating kitting and sequencing areas; timing and placing route trains; planning the warehouse structure including incoming parts; setting up special cargo carriers for kitting; and, last but not least, efficiently bridging the open spaces between the four facilities.



AWARD:

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Along the way, the companies faced some unique challenges. For example: the new processes had to be synchronized with the plant layout of a site that was already selected and rented, encompassing four hangars in an existing industrial park. In addition, spending had to be kept to a minimum.

Substantially changing the existing architecture was out of the question for an interim site. As a result, the processes had to be designed to adapt both in time and in space to existing physical conditions, which were less than optimal. Despite these challenges, BMW was able to successfully reach its ambitious project milestones in record time. How? By leveraging flexible, low-cost concepts, implemented in strict compliance with the lean philosophy, and by keeping the project pace high and spending low.

Today, BMW's interim production site sports two logistics and two assembly halls, each allowing for seamless expansion as needed. Best practices are at play throughout the facility. For instance, Kanban-scheduled route trains feature flow racks that enable the highly efficient supply of the entire assembly plant.

The BMW project is a great example of how manufacturers can ramp up to deliver a top quality product in record time, without high costs. Tapping into its experience with BMW and other global clients, Ingenics is available to help manufacturers around the world realize even their most ambitious expansion plans.

For more information, email us. contactICA@ingenics.com



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