



Case Study

Acme Smoked Fish Corporation

Industrial PCs
meeting strict
quality standards



noax industrial PCs at Acme Smoked Fish Corporation processing plant

noax industrial PCs: Part of a family tradition

A pair of heavily-insulated container doors slowly swings open through the crisp morning air. As the light from the unloading dock pierces through the escaping cold air produced from the container's

onboard chillers, the soft silhouettes of heavily loaded palettes slowly begin to emerge from the darkness. Immediately, an idling forklift jumps

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into action and methodically begins unloading the 44,000 pound shipment of Norwegian salmon into the receiving room at Acme Smoked Fish's new, state-of-the-art processing facility in Wilmington, NC. In less than an hour, the catch will be processed and on its way to the smokehouse, one of the most critical steps in ensuring that Acme's customers receive the quality and taste that they demand. With beginnings dating back to 1906, Acme Smoked Fish Corporation is a fourth-generation, family-owned and operated smoked fish producer specializing in smoked salmon, specialty smoked fish, herring, salads, and other specialty products. Headquartered in Brooklyn, NY, the company is widely recognized through their four distinct brands – Acme, Blue Hill Bay, Ruby Bay, and Great American – which are marketed and sold to different segments of the marketplace nationwide through a variety of restaurants, caterers, delis, private labels, and retailers like Costco and Whole foods. Thanks to their over 100-year old history in the seafood processing sector, Acme Smoked Fish has solidified a reputation for an unwavering commitment to quality and for offering products that cater to a wide range of tastes and preferences, including kosher certified products. To ensure their strict quality standards

are met, Acme chooses to work with industrial touchscreen computers from noax on the plant floor.

From Paper to PC

Prior to discovering noax, Acme operated their Brooklyn, NY facility using only pen and paper to record production data and monitor quality control. Not only was this method slow and tedious, the opportunity for error became too great. The decision was made to begin searching for a suitable plant floor PC solution. To guarantee that they could collect the real-time data needed to ensure proper taste and quality, Acme needed an industrial computer that was designed to operate reliably in the toughest conditions. After discovering noax at the Process Expo in late 2008, Acme took delivery of a noax S15 demo unit shortly

thereafter to perform an extensive "proof-of-concept" trial. According to Adam Caslow, Managing Partner of Acme and fourth-generation family member, "The construction of the noax PC was far beyond the other equipment I saw in the marketplace. Due to the sealed design and stainless steel construction, the noax PCs held up to our environment and our extensive sanitation process, without issue. I was confident that noax would deliver the reliability that we needed."

Safety through Modernization

Following a successful evaluation, Acme took delivery of its first nine noax S15 PCs in mid-2009. The 15" IP65-rated devices were implemented in several areas throughout their process and paired with specialty software from Computer Associates Inc. called Seasoft ERP®, a fully-integrated Windows-based ERP software



Processing-related data is available in real-time to ensure maximum productivity, quality, and efficiency throughout Acme's operations.

Traditions mark the past, inspire the present, and continue to shape the future of Acme Smoked Fish. With the help of noax industrial computers, Acme Smoked Fish has the ability to perfect their products, the techniques they use, and the effects it has on their evolving culture. While innovation and progress are important, tradition is what unites the companies together.

Acme's ability to produce a wide-range of seafood specialties has made them the top choice when buying premium smoked fish.



designed for the seafood processing industry. This combination of hardware and software has allowed Acme to modernize its processes while gaining valuable real-time insight into their production efficiency, yield, traceability, and quality. These capabilities, coupled with Acme's industry leading "Acme Quality Assurance Program," which seeks to promote and maintain quality standards and food safety certifications that are above industry standards, have allowed Acme to successfully pass the rigorous audits performed by independent 3rd parties, the FDA, the State of New York, the US Armed Forces, and their retail customers on a regular basis. Acme's BRC (British Retail Consortium) Certification, which is recognized as a Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) benchmark, is the latest example of their commitment to food safety and quality.

Partners in Growth

In late 2013, Acme Smoked Fish Corporation announced it would expand its manufacturing operations by adding a state-of-the-art 100,000 SF facility in Wilmington, NC capable of producing 250,000 lbs. of smoked salmon per week. Strategically positioned in North Carolina to complement Acme's existing Brooklyn, NY and Pompano Beach, FL locations, the new facility once again offered Acme the opportunity to research new vendors and solutions. As a company committed to continuous improvement, Caslow began researching the industrial computer market to see what other companies were offering. "As we try to do with everything we source for our facilities, we want to be sure we are getting the best return on the company's dollar," stated Caslow. In his research of other solutions, Caslow noticed an abundance of

lower-cost products and PCs that seemed to make the same promises as noax. Upon examining other units, it was evident that the quality of construction and the support that the cheaper products offered was subpar, prompting him to review the service history and pricing from noax to better understand the value Acme had been receiving. "To be honest, in the past 5 years, we



Automated systems allow Acme to view and capture all plant floor information easily.

haven't had any major service issues," discovered Caslow. "That is a testament to the quality and construction of noax units. Yes, the noax units are more expensive upfront, but we know we are eliminating the risk of failures from lesser quality equipment. If a cheaper solution fails, your costs will quickly double."

Due to come online in early 2015, the decision was made that the new Wilmington facility would again utilize noax S15 PCs, now featuring a newer generation mainboard. Initially, the noax PCs will be used in receiving, production, and packaging areas. In these areas the PCs, running the latest version of Seasoft software, will connect with digital scales to perform weight verification, yield calculating, temperature monitoring, and labeling. According to Caslow, "These noax PCs will be the hub of our quality assurance record keeping." Down the road, Acme hopes to also use the noax PCs to connect and monitor the smokehouse and refrigeration processes. "Due to the many standard interfaces that the noax PCs offer, we can easily move our PCs into new roles as our needs change," shared Caslow.

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A Bright Future

As an organization, Acme Smoked Fish's outlook is constantly evolving and always improving. For Caslow, noax PCs have given him peace of mind knowing that the hardware can evolve with the company. "Having a product that will survive many years in a wet and cold environment with little-to-no maintenance allows me to focus on the changes and improvements that really matter," states Caslow. "Whether I have needed a different operating system, mounting solution, had a simple question, or a little help to configure our new equipment in Wilmington, noax has shown that they are committed to responding to our needs quickly and thoroughly... for Acme, that really matters."



Acme Smoked Fish Corporation

Company Profile:

Based in Brooklyn, NY, Acme Smoked Fish is widely recognized as the industry leader for premium smoked seafood and pickled seafood products. The Acme brand is known for providing a diverse offering of smoked products in both retail and food services sizes.

Four brands make up the Acme line: the namesake Acme, all-natural and preservative-free Blue Hill Bay, innovation- and millennial-focused Ruby Bay, and Great American, a foodservice line exclusive to Florida, where the company has a separate production facility in Pompano Beach, FL.

For more information, please visit:
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Specifications and Applications

Objectives:

- ✓ Automatic data collection on scales and production machines
- ✓ Building a traceability database to ensure product safety
- ✓ Precise control over operations for product quality
- ✓ Real-time communications and data collection at various areas of production

IPC Requirements:

- ✓ Completely sealed construction in accordance with protection class IP65 (NEMA 4)
- ✓ Daily cleaning of the IPCs with disinfectants
- ✓ Function in harsh demanding environments
- ✓ Resistant to cleaning chemicals, extreme temperature, and high humidity
- ✓ High level of reliability to eliminate guesswork and human error
- ✓ Interfaces to various peripheral devices such as bar code scanners, printers

An Overview of Components

Hardware:

- S15 Industrial PCs
- In-house developed noax all-in-one mainboard
- Input: particularly robust touchscreens
- Protection standard IP65 (NEMA 4)
- Completely sealed, with internal fan

Software:

- Operating system: Windows 7
- Application program: Seasoft ERP software

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