

NWA Quality Analyst Goes Global for Better Nutrition

Fortitech, the world leader in the development of custom nutrient premixes for the food, beverage and pharmaceutical industries, chose NWA's Quality Analyst as its SPC standard. Speed, ease of use, and integration help the company expand its global business.

When a consumer product makes a specific health claim, the manufacturer is responsible for the health and nutrition claims made on the label. Consider the foods we eat; the sensitive formulations can be compromised by the physics of processing, distribution and storage.

That's why food scientists routinely sweat over details like: "should we use ascorbic acid or sodium ascorbate as our source of vitamin C?" or "Should we add vitamin E to enhance the availability of vitamin A?" And that's also why QA/QC experts need good software to manage product testing.

The Global Challenge

Fortitech, the leader in the development and manufacture of custom nutrient premix blends, chose NWA Quality Analyst as its standard SPC charting, analysis, and documentation tool. The company serves customers in the global food, beverage, and pharmaceutical industries that must in turn please their customers and government regulators.

Because customers have unique formulations for each product, Fortitech can access over 1,400 functional ingredients from a comprehensive selection of vitamins, minerals, amino acids, nucleotides, and nutraceuticals that can be used in a wide range of products, including baby formulas, cereals, bars, dairy products, nutrition and sports drinks, juices, snacks, waters, candies, and supplements, just to name a few. A product that needs to be produced from a single premix at several locations means that it is critical that Fortitech maintain uniform testing and manufacturing methods, from its headquarters in Schenectady, NY, to its divisions in Europe, Asia Pacific, South America, and Mexico.



Fast and Friendly

Standardizing on Quality Analyst is a key, early phase of the effort to guarantee a new level of analytical consistency, uniform batch processing, and customer satisfaction. So far, the SPC software is in place at Fortitech's U.S., Mexico, and Brazil facilities, with Denmark and Malaysia coming by year's end.

"Because our equipment, as well as our quality assurance and control procedures in all of our facilities throughout the world are standardized to meet the criteria for the Fortitech Quality Standard Seal program, it takes less effort to get our new facilities up and running," Panna Chaudhari, PhD, V.P. Scientific Affairs for Fortitech, says. "Standardization speeds our training and makes our methodology consistent in the development of our premixes. It also provides a comfort zone for the users because it helps them arrive at decisions more quickly."

Quality Analyst also speeds customer auditing across multiple Fortitech facilities. "Our customers can review the

SPC charts of our chemical analyses, or batch process samples, across several facilities, side-by-side, to validate that we are using the same processes and getting the same results everywhere. It shows them that we are doing our due diligence, and this has led to much shorter audits.”

“As a result,” she says, “our customers continue to have full confidence in us. They like us, and in some instances tell us they love us, because we can keep up with their standards.” With Quality Analyst helping Fortitech manage its testing and the uniformity of its batches across its facilities—and document the results—those food, beverage, and pharmaceutical customers can turn their attention to their core manufacturing and marketing competencies.

She admits to being “a little concerned” that users wouldn’t readily accept the new software. “But I have been pleasantly surprised. Our people love the software at every location where we have implemented it. They see the benefits it brings,” she says.

Part of the smooth adoption process is that it was user friendly. “We didn’t have to change the way we do things—how we operate, what we measure, or what we need in our control charts. We just saw what the software could do for us, and how it could help us improve the way we manage things,” she says.

Ready for Global Integration

Ultimately, Quality Analyst will consolidate all of Fortitech’s SPC charting activities including acceptance, warning, and rejection of out-of-spec materials. And it will do so in an integrated environment; Fortitech’s standardization efforts extend to unifying on a global LIMS platform. The integration project will begin in 2010.

Standard interfaces are readily available to establish data connections between NWA software and most major LIMS and instrumentation providers. This will help Fortitech automatically populate control charts, trend historic data, and provide additional documentation the company requires for its Six Sigma program. This will also eliminate the rekeying or copying and pasting of data (which will speed testing and reporting), and will enhance accuracy by eliminating the risk of errors due to manual entry.



The “Fortitech Quality Standard” Seal represents the pillars and the pledge to quality on which Fortitech was built – Leadership, Integrity and Certification



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