



One of the most modern manufacturing facilities in the world

Syntax develops and operates a factory control system for Smart Press Shop based on SAP S/4HANA Cloud and SAP Digital Manufacturing Cloud for Execution

Smart Press Shop GmbH & Co. KG is a joint venture between Porsche and the machinery manufacturer Schuler—and is setting new standards in digitalization. In Halle (Saale), the company commissioned a newly built factory for the production of car body parts. This represents a new approach for the partners: the manufacturer of forming machines and the buyer of car body parts are joining forces to become producers themselves. They are meeting Porsche’s own needs, and serving other customers.

Fully digitized, automated, and paperless

Innovative business models deserve adequate practical implementation. With this in mind, those in charge at Smart Press Shop were keen to build the new facility according to the latest standards. “Our production is fully digitized, networked, and automated; we are paperless and work exclusively with smartphones, tablets, and computers,” reports Hendrik Rothe, Managing Director of Smart Press Shop GmbH & Co. KG.

“Even things like access control and employee time tracking are handled via smartphone.” Maximum

transparency in all operational processes and, not least, end-to-end traceability of every single product—from raw materials through production data to delivery—were also part of the factory's requirements list.

In line with this, the ERP systems and production control were also to be designed to be modern and flexible. Moving to the cloud, with adaptability and scalability, the ability to access data anytime, anywhere, and the option to purchase IT products such as software, networks, or platforms as a service rather than having to operate them internally—that was an appealing prospect.

CUSTOMER STORY SMART PRESS SHOP

At a glance

- Industry: Automotive
- Location: Halle (Saale), Germany
- Solution: Digital factory with a factory control system based on SAP S/4HANA Cloud and SAP Digital Manufacturing Cloud.
- Result: Enhanced IT security and efficiency through digitized and automated production.



With Syntax, we have a partner at our side who knows how industrial companies operate, who understands their processes and unique characteristics—and therefore also understands what it takes to rethink existing workflows in the spirit of digitalization. Combined with their deep SAP and cloud expertise, this results in an almost unique blend. For me, industry, SAP, and Syntax belong together.

- Hendrik Rothe
Managing Director, Smart Press Shop GmbH & Co. KG



Software systems and IT service providers under scrutiny

When selecting the right systems, however, on-premises systems were initially shortlisted as well as cloud. In addition, Smart Press Shop set out to find a suitable partner for consulting and implementation of the ERP and MES systems, who would later also take over operations. After an intensive selection process, the decision was made in favor of SAP and cloud specialist Syntax, which brought three core competencies that were crucial to Smart Press Shop: industry experience, cloud, and ERP. “Thanks to its extensive expertise in the automotive supply industry, Syntax presented us with a compelling, end-to-end, and integrated concept that required absolutely no IT hardware in the factory—including the operation of the SAP systems as Software as a Service,” emphasizes Hendrik Rothe. “The Syntax experts made a highly competent impression right from the start, and we quickly realized that the proposals they brought to the table were exactly what we needed.”

Networking at all levels

Using Microsoft Teams as the primary communication and collaboration channel, one of the world’s most advanced factory control systems emerged from scratch in just nine months. What is often found elsewhere in separate, independently operated silos is fully integrated at Smart Press Shop through the combination of SAP S/4HANA Cloud Essentials and SAP Digital Manufacturing Cloud for Execution.

Automation and Digital Twin

But that’s not all: for example, the setup of tools and machines is fully automated as soon as a new order for body parts is scheduled for production. For Smart Press Shop, this is a strategic factor. “By being able to equip the production line with the new tools in the shortest possible time and without manual effort—with a production interruption of less than five minutes between two orders—even small batches are worthwhile,” emphasizes Managing Director Rothe. Smart Press Shop is thus taking just-in-time manufacturing to a new level and strengthening its own competitiveness.

For product traceability, the solution developed by Syntax relies on the principle of the digital twin: All material and process values generated during the laser cutting and pressing of body parts are recorded and stored in a multidimensional model using the Schuler Track & Trace system. Those in charge always know which batch the raw materials come from, can track production details down to specific times and process parameters such as temperatures or machine settings—and draw appropriate conclusions if they observe quality fluctuations, for example. Real-time production control is also possible thanks to this data, for instance to adjust the production speed or optimize the order sequence for greater efficiency.

Tangible metrics that deliver results

Operations at the press shop in Halle are now up and running—and the factory and control systems have passed their baptism by fire. The results are impressive, and they demonstrate that digitalization is not an end in itself, but rather drives tangible economic metrics. “We’re faster, we’re better, we’re more cost-effective—and it’s made in Germany,” Hendrik Rothe sums it up. **“We’re 60 percent faster in production preparation than conventional systems, we produce up to 25 percent faster, can economically produce 60 percent smaller batch sizes—which saves on storage costs—and we reduce time to market by up to 15 percent.”**

These figures reflect the many different individual measures and factors that Smart Press Shop implements based on the data landscape generated by the SAP systems. For example, the company makes optimal use of bottleneck capacities and can respond quickly to unexpected events. Non-value-added activities are eliminated using Robotic Process Automation (RPA), which optimizes production runs. In addition, digital operator guidance ensures that operator errors are a thing of the past, and thanks to continuous monitoring of processes, machines, and tools, Smart Press Shop achieves significantly higher productivity.

Syntax as a Partner for all IT needs

Syntax has taken over the management of the SAP systems and network infrastructure, so Smart Press Shop does not need to maintain an on-site IT team but can manage with a single IT coordinator. Smart Press Shop can also completely do without its own IT hardware, thereby saving on acquisition costs and the effort required for system maintenance. With Syntax's cloud-based software and hardware-as-a-service, the company is positioned flexibly, no matter where the journey takes it, regardless of when and how Smart Press Shop scales, and irrespective of where data needs to be displayed or feedback is required.

“Over the course of the project, Syntax has evolved into a partner that handles all our IT needs—from consulting and system customization to EDI and Active Directory issues,” emphasizes Hendrik Rothe. “This is a huge relief because it allows us to focus on our core business.”

All in all, the project has been a complete success, setting an important course for the future and executed with professionalism. “Choosing Syntax turned out to be the right decision,” Hendrik Rothe sums up. “We’ve implemented many things in the Smart Press Shop that had no precedents. It was certainly a risk, but also the only way to realize our vision of a modern, largely automated, and networked production process. With Syntax by our side, we felt well taken care of and secure every step of the way.”



About Syntax

Syntax is a leading global technology solutions provider driving enterprise transformation in the cloud. We help organizations modernize mission-critical applications through AI-enabled innovation, industry-tailored outcomes, and end-to-end solutions across strategic advisory, implementation, and managed services. Through our Boutique @ Scale approach, we tailor every engagement to our customers' priorities, blending boutique-level agility and care with the reach and resilience of a global enterprise. Supported by strategic partnerships with SAP and other technology leaders, we empower customers to scale faster, work smarter, and build for what's next.

Learn more about Syntax: www.syntax.com.

