Nestlé Uses iFIX and WIN-911 Mobile Alerts for Refrigeration Alarms

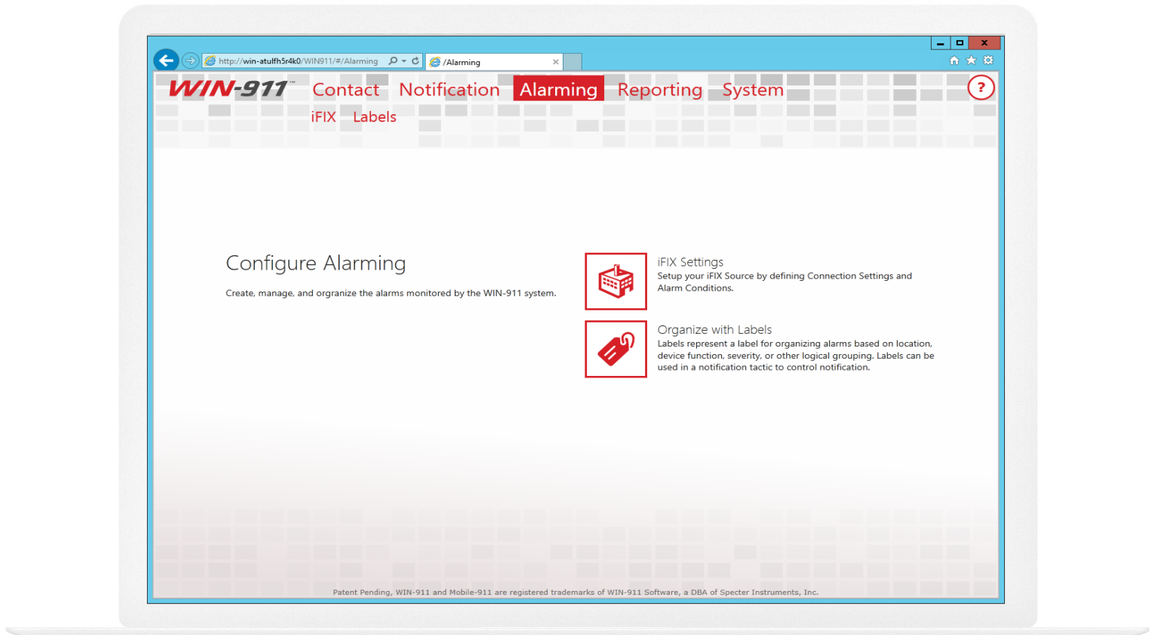
New system results in less production downtime

To expand their existing iFIX HMI/SCADA system from GE Digital, Nestlé recently installed WIN-911 as the alarm notification software upgrade for their ice cream freezing facility. The food processing, nutrition, health, and wellness giant was seeking a simple solution to help lessen the time between the triggering of alarms and the response time of refrigeration technicians. Since installing WIN-911 in conjunction with iFIX, their response time has been significantly reduced to less than ten minutes and production downtime has been virtually eliminated.

WIN-911 Easily Integrates with Existing iFIX HMI/SCADA

Nestlé's software distributor recommended WIN-911 as a suitable upgrade for their alarm response and distribution system. WIN-911 is the largest and most trusted provider of alarm notification software.

Their technology works well with Nestlé's existing HMI/SCADA, iFIX from GE Digital, part of the Proficy family. WIN-911 is compatible with iFIX, making it easy to install the software, import existing alarm tags, configure alarm escalation protocols, and begin implementation. WIN-911 offered guidance throughout the installation process, making the transition simple and non-disruptive.



Organization

- Nestlé Dreyer's Ice Cream Company

Notification Methods

- Mobile; Text

Need

- Improve notification and response times for refrigeration techs

Solution

- WIN-911 software, in conjunction with iFIX HMI/SCADA, utilized to organize and deliver mobile notification

Mobile Alerts Decrease Tech Response Time and Minimize Downtime

The primary refrigeration system at Nestlé is monitored by a local programmable logic controller (PLC) that controls a general alarm and several minor alarm triggers. Temperature alarms measure the temperature output of multiple interconnected systems at various stages of production. Each of these systems—including the spiral freezer, hardening tunnels, and storage areas for raw ingredients and finished products—require their own specific temperature settings. The facility's ammonia refrigeration system is also monitored for temperature and ammonia levels to prevent critical failures, such as a malfunctioning compressor.

Before WIN-911, an alarm triggered at the ice cream freezing facility required manual acknowledgment at the onsite HMI console. No mobile communication options were in place. If a technician was busy in another part of the plant, or somewhere offsite, they would need to return to the console to acknowledge and address the alarm. Previously, all alarms received the same notification, which meant technicians would have to go through and individually assess the alarms at the console. This created the risk of catastrophic product loss by way of unnoticed or unacknowledged failures.

Following implementation of WIN-911 alarm notifications via mobile text, average alarm response times were successfully reduced up to 60%; previous response times varied widely, however current alarm response times have been recorded averaging under 10 minutes. This decrease in response times has been attributed to the mobile delivery of alarms, as technicians are notified immediately when an alarm is triggered, and can assess and respond to the alarm in less time than it would take to physically travel to the HMI console from their previous task.

Promptly informing refrigeration technicians of an alarm was a big challenge. Some alarms are capable of shutting down the spiral freezers, hardening tunnels, or other equipment, so immediate response was crucial. In the worst-case scenario, an unacknowledged issue could cause the engine room to shut down, forcing the production line to halt. This would cause product loss of raw ingredients such as cream and egg yolks, variegates and particulates (the fudge swirls, chocolate chips, and other morsels that make Nestlé ice cream so delicious).

With WIN-911 successfully installed, refrigeration techs can now receive notice of an alarm as soon as it is triggered, even when they are offsite. WIN-911 is able to send alarm notifications via any mobile device, making it faster and easier to get in touch with the right personnel whenever an alarm is set off.

Operate Automated Food Processing Plants with Confidence

Installing WIN-911 was easy. Alarm tags were quickly imported and no major changes to the structure of the system were required.

The alarms did not need to be reprogrammed or altered and their triggers remained the same. WIN-911 allowed Nestlé to design a notification workflow; tailoring their alarms for a more efficient delivery process, sending immediate notice to the right refrigeration techs on duty. By using the same iFIX alarm structure and taking advantage of the mobile alert capabilities of WIN-911, the Nestlé ice cream freezing facility streamlined their operations, minimized downtime, and dramatically decreased technician response time to problem conditions. WIN-911's iFix flexibility and easy integration with iFix have encouraged the company to review other areas of the facility, such as maintenance and conveyor systems, for opportunities to utilize WIN-911 software.

"We're importing our existing tags—that's what is great about WIN-911, you can just import your alarm tags and don't have to recreate your alarms," stated Al Olivares from the IS/IT department at Nestlé. "It's easy to make the transition. "

About GE

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