Putting some 'Poka' in productivity

Every minute counts at one of our biggest integrated factories in Saint-Hyacinthe, Canada, where around 500 tonnes of chocolate are produced every day. Key is ensuring the highest quality of our products, as well as the flawless, cost-efficient functioning of the manufacturing process. Our 500 employees have a thorough knowledge of the machines and the processes and work very closely together in their teams. And that's where the brand new 'Poka-app' comes in to support.

In this user-friendly, versatile, cloud-based app – whose name is alluding to the Japanese term "Poka-yoke", meaning "mistake proofing" – all necessary information on machines and processes can be captured and updated via a tablet and shared in real time with the team members. Gateways to the content come in the form of QR codes fixed to the relevant piece of equipment. This enables operators to deliver and find information in a targeted manner with minimal time investment.

Richard Bilodeau, Continuous Improvement Manager: "Real-time inputs, in text or video format, are seamlessly transmitted to operators and maintenance teams for immediate reference and action, and simultaneously logged

for later use. All this simplifies not only the daily work and cooperation, but also the training of the employees."

The results of the introduction of the new system on four production lines are impressive: training time was halved and machine downtime was significantly reduced. John Schouten, Director Global Operational Excellence, who was instrumental in the development and implementation of the new app, is excited: "Our expectations have been exceeded in every respect. Overall, we were able to increase productivity by 4%, which is a great success in an already very efficient factory. We will now progressively roll out the new system worldwide."

All lines in Saint-Hyacinthe will be equipped with the new system before the end of 2018. In addition, pilot projects with the 'Poka-app' are being launched in all regions, and we aim to have all world-wide production sites adapting it within three years.
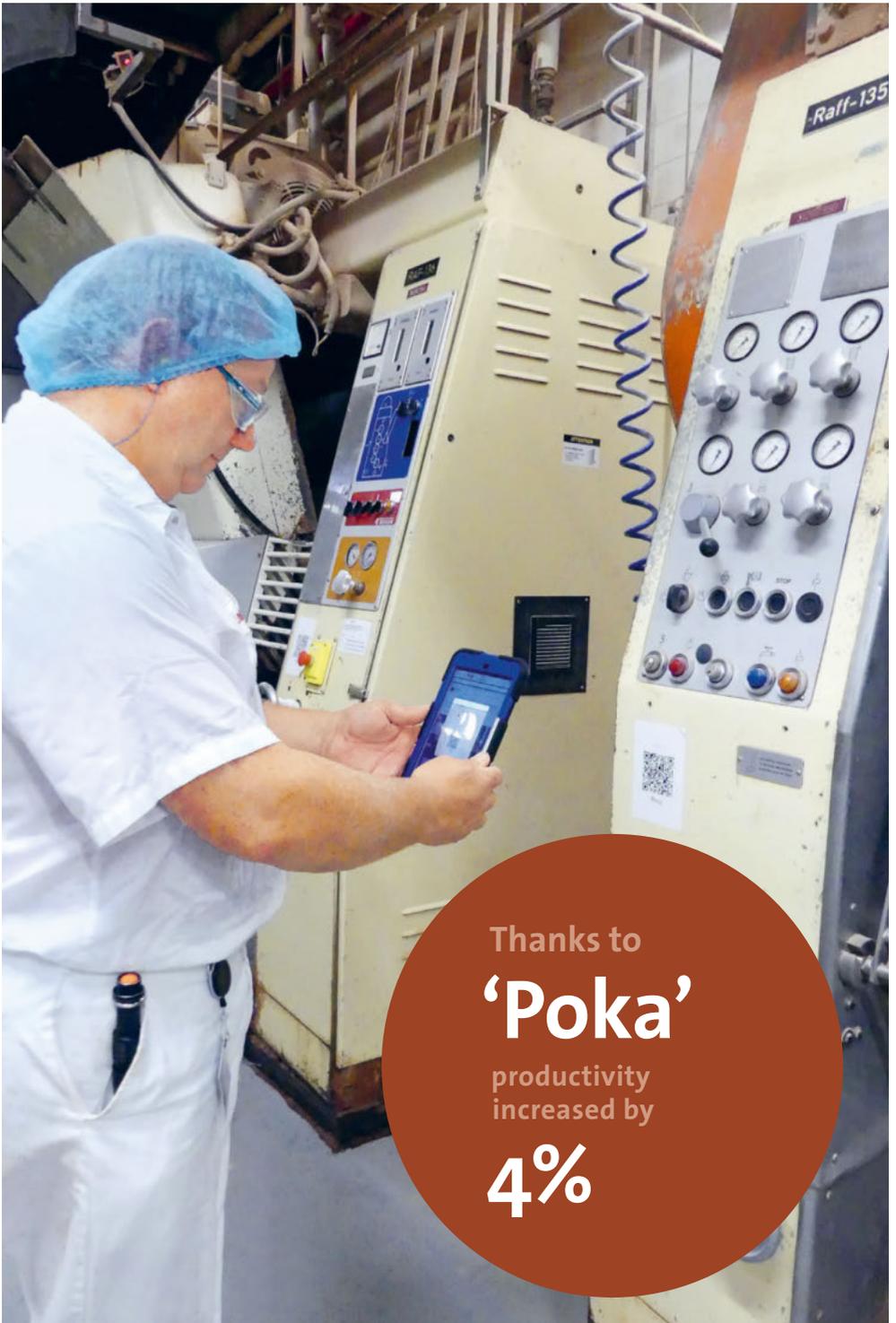
Thanks to
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