

# Agricultural Cooperative Solves Automation Problems with Ignition

## Eleven Key Issues Resolved

Cooperativa De Agricultores Federados Argentinos (AFA) is a very large agricultural cooperative that produces soybean flour, crude soybean oil, refined soybean oil, and various sub-products. To help streamline numerous processes within its plant in Los Cardos, Santa Fe, Argentina, AFA implemented Ignition by Inductive Automation®. Ignition is an industrial application platform with tools for creating solutions in human-machine interface (HMI), supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA), and the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT).

Ignition solved 11 problems for AFA. The problems were related to different versions of software, old operating systems, hardware that was hard to work with, inconsistent and de-centralized historical data, inadequate backup procedures, maintenance work being needed on each individual computer, too many applications needed to get the work done, no access to data outside the plant, and lack of reports on alarms and equipment failures.

Many problems were resolved with the Ignition architecture, which centralized both historical and real-time data in a single database. This allowed for better management of data overall. Ignition's licensing model, which provides unlimited licenses at no extra expense, was also helpful. And Ignition's ability to work with a variety of operating systems also improved things for AFA.

Autex S.A. is the system integrator for the various Ignition projects at AFA. Autex has provided services in numerous industries in Latin America and Europe. Alexis Chialvo, director of the technical office at Autex, thought Ignition would be a good fit for AFA. "Their idea was to have an integrated data management system, from the entry of raw materials to the finished product," Chialvo said.



**A single database led to benefits throughout the plant for Agricultores Federados Argentinos.**

"In every stage of the plant, they use Ignition to get data in real time."

AFA's interest in Ignition grew quickly once it saw how well it worked. "Ignition was first implemented in a small area of the plant," said Chialvo. "But when people at AFA saw the potential that the application had, they were convinced, and then we expanded it."

Ignition's modularity, scalability, low cost, and ability to work with AFA's existing operating systems were compelling reasons that led AFA to choose Ignition over other applications. With Ignition, AFA now has centralized data, a historian, alarms, and reports that enable better decision-making. AFA now sees Ignition as a key element for future projects.

### Lots of Data, Little Cost

Ignition puts data in the hands of operators who need it. "The biggest benefit of using Ignition is the access to all the information I need to input, or

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– Adrian David Angelinetto  
Chemical Technician  
Agricultores Federados Argentinos

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to know in order to operate the plant,” said Pablo Aguilera, plant operator for the refinery sector at AFA. “Ignition gives us quality control data and process control data, like temperature, level, and flow rate. All of these allow us to have an idea of the running process and the actions to take in order to fix possible deviation.”

Adrian David Angelinetto is a chemical technician for AFA. He’s been very happy using Ignition. “Both the laboratory operators and the rest of the plant operators are very satisfied with it,” he said. “With Ignition, we’ve noticed significant time savings in information management. Ignition is easy to use and very practical.”

Ignition’s unlimited licensing model means low costs for AFA. “The cost of Ignition had a lot to do with the decision to install it,” said Carrere Raul Adelqui, production coordinator at AFA. He also mentioned the ease with which Ignition can be expanded. “As sectors of the plant continue growing, the number of people using Ignition will be growing as well,” he said.

#### **Before and After**

“The improvements with Ignition are the accurate reports,” said Edgardo Di Filippo, a technician in food industries at AFA. “Before, we used a lot of notepads, where data can be easily modified.

Now with Ignition that doesn’t happen. It’s much better.” Di Filippo said data collection had also been a problem because there are so many different areas within the plant. “Losing data was a daily issue before, but with Ignition we’ve had a great improvement,” he said.

There have been numerous other benefits throughout the plant. For example, because Ignition allows SCADA, historical data, alarms and reports to run on one system, the maintenance workload has been drastically reduced. More data is available to operators on the plant floor, and it’s easy for them to access. Operators have better control options as well. Meanwhile, laboratory, supervisory, and management personnel also have access to real-time and historical production data. Also, Ignition’s flexibility makes it easy for AFA to change out old hardware and to upgrade operating systems whenever it’s needed.

“AFA now has a system with practically zero fail rates, data centralization, alarms, and alarm history. It also has high availability, and consistency with its historical and real-time data,” said Chialvo of Autex.

All the success at AFA is not surprising to Autex, a company that strongly believes in Ignition. “We like it because it’s so flexible, is easy to use, has a low cost, and runs on every operating system,” said Chialvo. “We’ve used Ignition for a wide variety of clients in several industries.”

*Autex S.A. is dedicated to the development, testing, plant startup, and maintenance of industrial control systems. Based in Villa Maria, Córdoba, Argentina, Autex S.A. has provided engineering services and automation to organizations in a variety of industries, including food & beverage, biodiesel, alternative energies, mining, cement, nuclear energy, and aerospace. For more information, visit: [www.autex.com.ar](http://www.autex.com.ar)*

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