MICROSOFT DYNAMICS AX
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LIAD ELECTRONICS BREDA B.V

"The collaboration with Ultimate Software has always been smooth and flawless. This is the reason that we've been working together for such a long time."

Ultimate Software

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During the last year Liad Electronics has undergone a metamorphosis. "We're busy with a process innovation that we think will be unique in Europe, at any rate in the Netherlands. In this way we're achieving a completely integrated management of our production process", says Ad Meesters, General Manager of Liad.
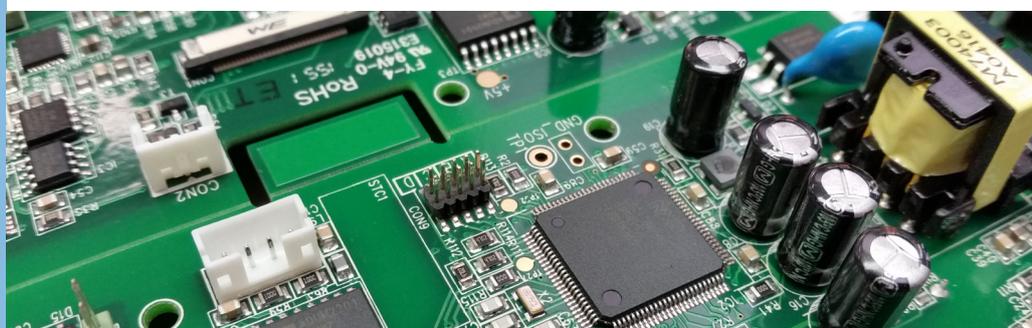
Introducing Liad Electronics

Liad Electronics is a company that does electronic board assembly [PCB assembly] – the mounting of electronic components on PCBs for high-end, professional electronics. This means that sometimes Liad will make just a single PCB for a specific application, and other times a series totaling 5 to 10 thousand units. The small quantities in a series mean that the assembly machines must often be changed over. The boards themselves are purchased. Based on a customer-provided design, which itself is part of the development of a product, the components are mounted on the board and soldered. Ad says: "Liad is often in contact with the customer before the development of the product has been completed. When the design is ready, we first see if it can indeed be made as intended. If this is the case, it's produced and then tested to see if everything works as expected."

Liad's customers often operate in a niche market. As examples of professional applications, one can think of measuring instruments, control systems for access control, or automatically controlled lorries at a transshipment company.

Liad has been using Microsoft Dynamics AX as a standard solution for years and has also collaborated for a long time with Ultimate Software. Ultimate Software was the [right] match for Microsoft Dynamics when that fact was not well known in the Dutch market. In 2015 Liad decided to drastically automate their production process, with among other things, a fully automated warehouse using 'pick & place' equipment that communicates with systems around the globe. Ultimate Software has been asked to develop the interface for these systems.

In Dynamics AX, Liad does the administration, sales, purchasing, inventory management and planning. With the help of other systems they monitor the execution of the production process. By means of an interface with Dynamics AX, they now have full "track and trace" capability at the component level.

Ad explains the process: "We write our own description of the functionality we require. Then we ask Ultimate Software for their opinion, because at times there are smarter solutions than we can think of. They then produce a plan detailing how it will be carried out. After the decision has been made, we step back, and put execution into the hands of the parties involved in the implementation of the interface. Experts together – that works very well!"

Ad says: "The 'Manufacturing Execution System' that we've implemented communicates with ERP systems, but also with the machines and with people, so that throughout the entire production process we always know where our products are located and which production phase they're in. The fact that visitors see efficient streamlining, care, and quality increases our appeal to prospects."

About Ultimate Software: "What they do well is not to think from the perspective of the system they work with, but instead from the perspective of the customer's process. In doing so, they have the guts to say how it should be done even if they earn little in the process because the solution may use a different software package. The speed with which the various matters are taken care of, the flexibility with which they position themselves within this project, their awareness of the importance of what we need to do; these are all reasons why this metamorphosis has proceeded in such a satisfactory way over the last year. They deliver a relatively small part of the entire project, but are a very important link. They come up with smart things and think before they act!"