

**SAFETYCHAIN SUCCESS STORY:  
HOW ROSINA FOOD PRODUCTS  
ACHIEVED DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION  
FROM THE PLANT FLOOR UP**





In manufacturing, what's comfortable isn't always what's best. Brands that have a decades-long track record of success often rely on the same methods for data collection that they've always used. While paper and clipboards may be familiar, this approach isn't the most efficient. Recognizing this, Rosina Food Products sought to implement a platform that would streamline data collection within their plants. The initiative was spearheaded by Brian Marek, TQM System Specialist, with the help of Angela Falletta, Training Manager.

Beyond driving efficiency, however, Marek knew that by continuing to use paper, there was a missed opportunity to actually derive value from data being collected. With a paper-based system, few eyes would ever see the data being captured; instead, it would get filed away, never to be seen again. A plant management platform would allow leadership to see data that mattered when it was most useful for driving meaningful, well-informed decisions.

Marek knew the potential a plant management system held, but communicating this value to key stakeholders would be another matter. As with any change, it would take buy-in from leadership to be realized. Just as importantly, they'd need support from the front-line workers who would be using the system. With clear goals and anticipated outcomes, as well as a detailed implementation strategy, the team not only achieved buy-in but also rolled out the platform successfully. How exactly did they get their team – from leadership to operators – to embrace paperless operations? Here's a closer look at the drivers behind their success.

## Why a Digital Transformation — And Why Now?

“Digital Transformation” is a loaded concept that means something different to every organization. For manufacturers, it usually refers to the reduction or elimination of paper on the plant floor and the integration of real-time data to the manufacturing process.

But *why* an organization starts a shift to becoming paperless varies. A few reasons include:



Digital Transformation must be a technological and cultural journey. Not only must your business integrate technology into all areas, change how it operates, and provide value to stakeholders, but it must also undergo a cultural transformation that requires staff training, support, and executive buy-in.

Indeed, it's no small effort to pursue Digital Transformation, but it's becoming a necessity to keep pace in modern manufacturing. To remain efficient and competitive, it's no longer a question of whether Digital Transformation is needed, but when. For most companies, there's no better time than the present, but there were some unique circumstances Rosina Foods faced that made it an ideal time for the shift. In particular, a new plant was on the horizon for the company. The promise of opening a new facility and rolling out paperless operations from day one was compelling.

Next, we'll take a closer look into the circumstances that led the company to act.



## About Rosina Food Products



Rosina Food Products is an Italian food manufacturer well-known for its commitment to quality, consistency, and customer service. Founded in 1963, the second-generation, family-owned manufacturer operates three production facilities focused on meatballs, pasta, entrees, and ingredients. With more than 700 employees across Western New York, Rosina Foods has become an international provider of specialty Italian products that can be found in supermarkets, wholesale clubs, military commissaries, cafeterias, and restaurants throughout North America and around the world.

Having grown so much, Rosina foods needed to upgrade how they operated their facilities. While their heavy reliance on paper forms was what their teams knew best, it left room for inefficiencies and errors. Paper-based quality and safety checks meant data analytics for yield and accurate critical control point (CCP) checks were time-consuming, and at times, inaccurate. Document management was also inconsistent and cumbersome. There were often delays when updating records across all facilities, and data retrieval was tedious.



Marek saw these challenges as an opportunity for improvement. He knew that paper was limiting collaboration and visibility at each plant, and the company's plan for a new facility wouldn't prosper with the status quo. The successful opening of a new plant would require a solution for real time, accurate data.

At the time, Rosina Foods had two plants: a meat (protein) factory and a pasta factory. The pasta factory was entirely reliant on paper processes, while the protein plant operated with a hybrid of a paper-based and "home-grown" systems. Marek wanted to be prepared with a better solution before the opening of the new facility, but recognized that the success hinged on support from employees. Rosina Foods therefore needed a solution that was both effective and user-friendly.

## Eliminating Paper

To adopt technology that would eliminate paper processes, Rosina Foods aimed to roll out the solution slowly, staging it by facility and function. The implementation focused on the use of SafetyChain for document and record control. The leadership team collaborated with the quality department to ensure team leads were fully trained in the system – for quality and production forms – and onboarded a training manager to assist with adoption and implementation.

Outdated processes requiring manual entry and tasks needed to be updated, replaced, or eliminated to make room for new automated and tablet-based data entry. The learning curve that came with these changes meant that Rosina Foods had to properly train staff on how to use the technology in a way that emphasized their importance as a part of the process and team.

The use of SafetyChain began with two initial goals:

- ▶ Ensuring staff would be receptive to the transition from paper to digital format
- ▶ Ensuring the accuracy of the information recorded

To achieve these goals, Rosina Foods developed a three-pronged strategic approach:

### Creating focus groups

Employees need to feel heard during an implementation. Giving them a platform to speak about their uncertainties allowed for feedback and presented opportunities for leaders to gauge the success of the implementation, while also addressing any issues that needed attention. Focus groups should be monitored and structured, with the goal of gathering specific feedback from employees.

Management must also follow up on issues to show front-line staff that they're not only being heard, but that their concerns are being addressed, to build credibility.

### Using clear and simple system walkthroughs to train staff

Adopting new technology may come easily for the subject matter experts who have worked with it extensively. Yet, front-line operators are likely seeing it for the very first time during training. Clear, simple walkthroughs can therefore be invaluable training tools. Use step-by-step instructions and visuals, along with quick access to frequently asked questions.

**"We were doing a lot of our documentation on the production floor. Just getting piles of dirty, messy paper, bringing them back to our office, hoping all the information was still on the paper as we're reviewing it, then throwing it in a box, putting it somewhere, and hoping you never had to see it again."**

*Brian Marek, TQM System Specialist, Rosina Food Products*



## Developing targeted training strategies

How do you know if the platform is doing what it's supposed to? The answer lies in monitoring data as it comes in. Look for red flags that could indicate a misunderstanding, such as CCPs that are significantly higher than they should be. This will allow you to pinpoint specific departments or shifts that could benefit from targeted coaching sessions. Consider having staff teach the system to you to demonstrate their understanding of it. Then, check back in later to verify that they're using the technology correctly.

Before introducing SafetyChain to line operators, QA and leadership mirrored their existing paper documents so data fields would be familiar to staff members. They pursued a gradual phase-out of paper-based processes, using both manual and digital data collection side-by-side for a month to ensure teams were confident using the system. As production staff began seeing the power of SafetyChain, operations became much smoother.

Rosina Food's successful elimination of paper involved the whole company, from the production floor's suggestions on how to update old paper forms in their new digital format, to management's questions on how to utilize the data collected by the new system. The gradual replacement of paper processes with SafetyChain at each plant eventually expanded beyond QA and production to every other department. Company-wide adoption established comfort with the new technology before the opening of Rosina Food's third facility.

## Expanding Beyond the Plant Floor

After the successful transformation of document and record control, Rosina Foods realized there were more processes in their facilities they could automate. They began digitizing daily tasks, such as case inspections, product testing, temperature monitoring, and facility inspections.

Leaders and staff within QA, production, and maintenance departments were able to collaborate in real-time, and the data once confined to paper was now available for quick analysis within SafetyChain's dashboards. Customized views for users were designed based on different job roles. Executives were given read-only access with customized dashboards, allowing them to see production results whenever they would like, in real-time. Supervisors and managers were given modified access based on job responsibilities, so the daily tasks assigned to their teams could be monitored, and historical data could be analyzed. Dashboards are utilized by management with other programs to trend KPIs such as Foreign Material Waste, Daily Sanitation Compliance, Trending Product Yield, and Dough to Fill Ratios. With real-time information, communication has improved significantly. Decision-making is also faster and based on hard data.





Data is also used on the supplier end, ensuring the correct records are kept to be audit-ready. Even maintenance teams monitor dashboards to fulfill their roles more effectively. For example, staff can now monitor temperatures in freezers and ovens, and address the situation proactively before having to shut down lines. Everyone has become a part of the continuous improvement cycle, leveraging data to look for deviations, improve product quality, audit scores, and plant efficiency. More importantly, issues can be addressed promptly before anything leaves the facility, thereby reducing the risk of recalls, saving the company money, and promoting food safety.



Following the success of Digital Transformation in their existing facilities, Rosina opened their new plant with 80% paperless operations. Since day one, there has been no paper on the production floor, which meets their goal of running a technology-driven, sustainable operation.





## Moving Forward: Deriving More Value from Digital Transformation

Every organization has different needs and expectations when it comes to technology. Nonetheless, there are a few best practices that can apply to food companies of every type and size. Here are some of the learnings that Rosina Foods gathered from their experience:

Currently, Rosina Foods is working on the implementation of Dynamic flow, a component of SafetyChain that allows users to set up rules to trigger next steps when a particular task is completed. Once one department completes its portion of a process, the next task will automatically be added to the next area's to-do list. This will further streamline record-keeping and workflows.

The Training Manager will continue to assist with classroom, hands-on training, and confirmation of understanding. This support will help staff to feel supported and ensure errors are corrected and further coaching is provided when needed.

Since implementing SafetyChain, collective and individual morale has increased across the organization. Associates are now able to see the results of what they're producing in real-time, rather than waiting for the numbers to be posted. They're also more empowered within the overall process of production, since they are better able to resolve issues as they arise.

**"Production wasn't just looking at the numbers. They were looking at what QA was doing and vice versa."**

*Brian Marek, TQM System Specialist, Rosina Food Products.*



While any big change comes with growing pains, Rosina Foods has seen the payoff that comes with putting in the effort to achieve Digital Transformation. To date, they've saved 56% in paper consumption, and anticipate further paper reduction as they find new ways to implement SafetyChain. They've seen other significant benefits to their bottom line, including \$10 million in savings.

**56%**  
**SAVINGS**  
IN PAPER CONSUMPTION

**\$10M**  
**IN SAVINGS**  
TO THEIR BOTTOM LINE

The company now enjoys having localized lot traceability and real-time access to data which allows them to feel confident in the food products they are producing. Through the proper planning, training, and support, the company has successfully phased out paper and continues to leverage the value of having a digital plant management system.



## About SafetyChain

SafetyChain is a digital plant management platform for process manufacturers trusted by more than 2,000 facilities to improve plant-wide performance. It unifies production and quality teams with data and insights, tools, and delivers real-time operational visibility and control by eliminating paper and point solutions. Used on the shop floor, SafetyChain connects operators, FSQA, maintenance, EH&S, and leadership with equipment and supplier performance.