



CASE STUDY

Higher operational consistency, production quality and efficiency than ever before

Cooper deploys Octave Reliance (formerly ETQ Reliance) in all its locations to meet the quality challenges inherent in a widely dispersed manufacturing environment.

Key facts:

Company: Cooper Tire & Rubber Company

Industry: Automotive

Country: United States

Octave products used: Reliance (*ETQ Reliance*)

Key benefits:

- Achieved operational consistency and quality across global manufacturing locations
- Reduced manufacturing cost and scrap through minimized product variance and nonconformance
- Centralized document control and training records to meet IATF 16949 standards for OEM market entry

In 1926, Ira J. Cooper developed the "Cooper Creed" — a mantra of sorts, focusing the company on providing "good merchandise, fair play and a square deal."

Today, Cooper Tire & Rubber Company is a global manufacturer of tires for cars, SUVs and light trucks and that creed guides the company to this day. While manufacturing methods and technology have changed dramatically over the decades, the firm's commitment to quality is unwavering. From tire development and design at the company's headquarters in Findlay, Ohio to manufacturing and testing locations in North America, Asia, Latin America and Europe, Cooper deploys Octave Reliance® in all its locations to meet the quality challenges inherent in a widely dispersed manufacturing environment. Given that tires are considered an essential safety component of a vehicle, meeting all relevant quality standards is critical.

The company also knows that it must continually improve EHS programs to continue to lead in an era of dynamic regulatory changes and stronger compliance obligations.

Challenge

Until recently, Cooper Tire focused strictly on the after-market replacement tire business. Now, however, the firm is moving into the original equipment market and supplying tires directly to manufacturers. Outside of a major market opportunity expansion, one of the results of this strategic change is the need to conform to IATF 16949. IATF 16949 builds on ISO 9000 to create a more thorough, rigid and better documented quality standard specific to the automotive market. While many of the processes are similar between ISO 9000 and IATF 16949, the IATF standard calls for more detailed pre-production review of elements such as customer requirements and manufacturing feasibility.

“One of the great things about Reliance is you can use it both out of the box, and to easily build and configure anything you might need. It is very flexible, and it works everywhere.”

Michael Fennema
Leader, Quality Systems,
Cooper Tire & Rubber
Company



Solution

Cooper Tire originally deployed Octave Reliance to manage electronic document control but with a plan for the system to handle more than that, like internal design validation, at locations around the world. Previously, the company had no proper systems for managing, storing, sharing or updating documents and the information they contain. Like many firms that are just beginning their quality journey, Cooper Tire used email and documents housed in SharePoint to manage transparency, visibility, traceability and accountability of its production process, quality checks and standards compliance.

“One of the great things about Reliance is you can use it both out of the box, and to easily build and configure anything you might need. It is very flexible, and it works everywhere,” said Michael Fennema, Leader, Quality Systems, Cooper Tire & Rubber Company. “We localize the application, so all of our facilities use it consistently.”

The ability to share requirements across locations allows Copper to see how all facilities implement corporate requirements and ensure that tires are being built in the same way at every location. For example, every tire is the product of several component elements, compounds and materials from several third-party suppliers. With a consistent, automated quality management system (QMS), Cooper can be assured that every tire is built the same way, with reduced levels of nonconformance and scrap, in every manufacturing plant.

Cooper has deployed other Octave Reliance processes, like Employee Training, to gain a similar level of efficiency and consistency. Fennema notes, “The Employee Training Module has been incredibly useful. We used to struggle maintaining training records for each employee in each location. Now, we have definitive access to training records that show us exactly what has been accomplished and what needs to be done in the future. This is helpful for both Cooper staff and external auditors.”

Quality journey



Manual system

Needed a system to manage, store and update documents



No-code configurability

Adapt quickly to ever evolving business needs



IATF standards

Strategic move to OEM market

Results

Today, Octave Reliance is the QMS of record for all of Cooper Tire's quality assurance efforts. In partnership with Octave, Cooper has achieved higher levels of operational consistency and production quality and efficiency than before.

The company has seen significant reduction in operational risk and manufacturing cost thanks to minimized product variance and nonconformance. With more tires coming off the assembly line within mandated specifications, the company generates less scrap, which yields lower cost of production. Additionally, Cooper is using Octave Reliance to capture customer information and feedback in a centralized repository, which allows the company to act quickly to address any customer concerns and record necessary responses and actions related to that feedback.

Data transparency is another benefit, as Cooper can now readily access, share and modify documents in a central location — documents that had once been hidden in email accounts and servers scattered around the globe. The company has seen a reduction in the scale of issues raised by internal audits. Over time, Fennema and his team will use Reliance's flexibility and configurability to adjust and tune the systems to ensure maximum production efficiency, continuous improvement in audit performance and adherence to future IATF standards.

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About Cooper Tire & Rubber Company

Cooper Tire & Rubber Company (NYSE: CTB) is the parent company of a global family of companies that specializes in the design, manufacture, marketing and sales of passenger car, light truck, medium truck, motorcycle and racing tires. Cooper's headquarters is in Findlay, Ohio, with manufacturing, sales, distribution, technical and design operations within its family of companies located in more than one dozen countries around the world. For more information on Cooper, visit www.coopertire.com.

About Octave

Octave is a leader in enterprise software, turning data into decisive action and intelligence into your edge. Our software solves for and simplifies complexity, from the design and build to operations and protection of people, property and assets — for any scope, at any scale. For decades, we've partnered with customers to sharpen performance, elevate efficiency and amplify results. From factory floors to entire cities, our solutions are tuned to scale up what's possible from day one onward.

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