

# Siemens Plant Management

*Plantville Boasts 21,000 Players in more than 160 Countries*

Once upon a time there was a computer. This computer served as a conduit to waste a great deal of time through social networking and online video games. Still, there was always potential to turn these rather sedentary activities into something more positive and useful to mankind. Siemens may have stumbled upon such a concept.

“Siemens was looking for a way to leverage the online world to engage customers, prospects, employees and students to showcase the breadth and depth of our portfolio,” says Michael Krampe, director, media relations at Siemens. “We wanted to help our employees better understand the overall, integrated value that Siemens Industry can bring to its customers and prospects. We were also looking for a way to reach and inspire the next generation of plant managers and engineers and make manufacturing cool again.”

Plantville, an online gaming platform that simulates the experience of being a plant manager, was released in March of 2011. In the game, players are faced with the challenge of maintaining the operation of their plant while trying to improve the productivity, efficiency, sustainability and overall health of their facility.

In Plantville, players can select which of the three virtual plants they would like to manage first: a bottling plant, a vitamin plant or a plant that builds trains. At the start of the game, each type of plant is faced with different challenges. The players must identify the challenges facing their plant and implement solutions to improve the plant’s key performance indicators (KPIs). Gamers will compete with one another on a number of levels, including plant-to-plant and on specific KPIs. Pete, an interactive plant manager, keeps track of a leader board that details which players are performing the best on each of the levels. It’s Farmville for the manufacturing/engineering crowd.



“One year since the launch, more than 700 educational institutions—high schools and universities—are playing Plantville, and several have held competitions among their students,” Krampe says. “By playing Plantville, students are able to hone their problem solving and critical thinking skills, as well as their ability to collaborate as a team. These are vital 21st century skills and abilities that are in high demand by employers today.” Krampe believes the beauty of using Plantville as a platform to promote the nuances, intricacies and relevancy of manufacturing for the United States is that students are experiencing the real world complexities of operating a plant in a virtual gaming environment.

“Plantville, like the plants within it, will continue to undergo updates and changes to reflect the continuing advancement of Siemens’ technologies, as well as other elements that change or have an impact on industry and infrastructure.”

Though the most challenging aspect of the project is to accurately simulate the day-to-day experiences of a plant manager, Krampe says that the participants (currently 21,000 players in more than 160 countries) enjoy the various daily challenges the game offers.

“Students really have to use their critical thinking skills to be successful in the game,” Krampe says. “But when you can have students apply math and science standards in a fun, engaging way that provides measureable feedback through a reward system, you bring excitement to education.”

For more information, visit [www.plantville.com](http://www.plantville.com).