

## HOW PARSABLE, THE SLACK FOR MANUFACTURERS, PLANS TO UPEND THE CONSUMER GOODS MARKET

By Dan Spinelli | Published July 21, 2017

At consumer packaging giant Unilever's plant in Tultitlán, a city in the northeastern part of Mexico, workers produce spreads, dressings and ice cream. And for close to 30 years, staff has managed shipments and employee performance the tried and true way: with binders, reams of paper and walkie talkies.

That all changed when Parsable, a collaborative software startup, came on the scene. Now, the San Francisco-based firm has eyes on revolutionizing the way manufacturers communicate and keep track of their work.

The startup founded by Ryan Junea, 37, Yan-David Erlich, 39, and Chase Feiger, 29, makes it easier to track projects and coordinate within industrial teams through their SaaS communication platform, a "Slack" of sorts for industry and manufacturing. Its clients include big oil and gas firms like Schlumberger and energy company TechnipFMC. Parsable's new deal with Unilever, announced in June 2016, marks the five-year-old company's first entry into the consumer goods space.

The three facilities inside Unilever's plant that began using Parsable's software "went from collecting zero data points a day to collecting thirty thousand data points a day," says Chase Feiger, cofounder of Parsable and a member of the 2017 30 Under 30 list in Manufacturing & Industry.

Because Unilever employees in the Tultitlán facilities now have access to smartphones and tablets running on Parsable's software they can collaborate easily while supervisors monitor progress and identify any bottlenecks, throwing out the rulebook for traditional coordination between manufacturers, managers and staff.

"Paper is what's used in these field service environments and manufacturing environments," Feiger said. Since Parsable's introduction, that paper-and-pencil style of operations has been almost entirely eradicated across Unilever's facilities there.

Inside the plant, Parsable's technology has sparked a decrease in rates of repeat cleanings — an important improvement in a food manufacturing facility where equipment and products are regularly inspected.

One key improvement Parsable has implemented, says Abishek Belani, a sales executive at Parsable in charge of the Unilever account, is the ability to "prompt" the next worker in a production line in order to reduce lag time. The result? Start-up,

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Two Unilever employees using Parsable's technology in their plant in Tultitlán, Mexico.

shutdown and changeover sequence times have decreased by 50% as over 80% of the plant's operating procedures have shifted to Parsable's messaging platform and mobile apps.

Parsable, which has raised over \$28 million in venture capital funding and counts Google Ventures, Andreessen Horowitz, Lightspeed Venture Partners and Saudi Aramco among its investors, embraces Industry 4.0, the latest phrase du jour to describe a partnership between human and machine work.

Connecting workers through digitization and embracing machinery in the industrial space — catch-all parts of Industry 4.0 — aim to curb the hidden and overt costs of mistakes stemming from production failures.

The cost of even small deviations from standardized production procedures is wasted money, product malfunctions and accidents. "More than a dozen crashes between 2005 and 2015 involved airline or commercial charter plane crew members failing to follow established procedures," four Parsable executives wrote in a piece published this month in the American Oil & Gas Reporter. Connecting workers digitally should decrease the rate of workplace accidents by 13%.

While Parsable hasn't publicly said if it plans to further its relationship with Unilever at other plants or what other industries it aims to penetrate next, one could easily see hints in the Oil & Gas Reporter piece, which details ways automation can help the electronics, aviation and healthcare spheres.

Despite the benefits of automation in the manufacturing and industrial space, some employees may reasonably worry for their job security when, as a McKinsey report states, current technologies have the capacity to automate "45% of the activities people are paid to perform." But Parsable is not concerned with replacing people with machines, says Belani. It's committed to improving and easing the jobs already performed by humans to make for a more connected, efficient workplace.

"We're not focused on machines," he says. "We're focused on people."

## About Parsable

Parsable helps the world's largest industrial firms get jobs done right—every time. Most companies know that adhering to Standard Work processes produces the best results, but have trouble getting their teams to follow these processes resulting in lost productivity and poor quality. Parsable provides an Industry 4.0 Connected Worker platform so employees can collaborate together in paperless, mobile, and digital business processes. Teams know what work they need to do, and how and when they need to do it right on their mobile devices. Each step and action is measured and employees can raise issues and provide feedback so that every process is quickly analyzed and improved.

For more information on going fully digital and enabling the last mile of productivity, contact us at 1-888-681-2119 or [www.parsable.com/contact](http://www.parsable.com/contact).

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