



Excellence in production control and administration for manufacturing businesses

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DATATRACK PROVIDES TOTAL MANAGEMENT OF PLASTIC SUBCONTRACTOR'S ADMINISTRATION



From quoting to invoicing, ordering raw materials to fully traceable despatch, PSL Datatrack's business management software has proven invaluable to Plastic Turned Parts (PTP) of Hertfordshire since day one of the company's operation in 2004.

"The administration behind the manufacturing of a wide variety of engineered plastics parts in many different batch sizes for many different customers would have been impossible without PSL Datatrack," says PTP's Managing Director Jonathan Newis.

Located in Watton at Stone near Stevenage, PTP is a leading precision engineering company specialising in plastic turned parts, designed and manufactured to customer specifications. Raw materials include nylons, Acetal, Acrylic, Delrin, HDPE, polypropylenes, Rulon, PEEK, PTFE and many others. The company operates several CNC automatic fixed head and sliding head automatic lathes, including a Citizen K16 with an IEMCA bar feeder, a manual lathe and a CNC milling machine to engineer many types of plastic components for different industry sectors in batch sizes from below 100-off to over 10000.

The company's success has been built around the ability to create quotations more quickly than the competition, fast turn round of production and full product traceability together with the company's ISO 9001 certification. To achieve these competitive advantages, the company relies upon PSL Datatrack software and its implementation has given Jonathan Newis the time to manage the whole PTP business rather than getting side-tracked into important yet non-productive administration duties.

"It's very important in a small company to have the time to focus on all elements of the business without having to worry about some of the important routines – and this is what PSL Datatrack lets me do," he says.

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PTP specializes in plastic turned parts and does not try to mix metals machining. In doing so, the company has carved out a profitable market niche, as many customers do not want to buy from subcontractors that mix plastics with metal working activity due to contamination risks and lack of real plastics expertise. With this immediate advantage, it was important for PTP to also gain the confidence of customers by also having a first class business administration system.

Various business software packages were examined before opting for PSL Datatrack on account of its simplicity to use and its flexibility which has allowed the company to add additional modules over time in line with taking on new and more customers. PTP used PSL Datatrack from day one and the first investment was in the Sales Module which included the creation of quotations, work orders, component stocks, cost centres, process layouts, deliveries and invoicing.

The whole package was trialled, installed and up and running in just two working days. "This investment got our order processing operation working extremely efficiently," says Jonathan. "Our quotations are based on creating a price for the job with information on raw materials quantities and pricing, materials in stock, estimated production times, machine utilization and man hours. PSL Datatrack creates this information for us and it can also be recalled at any time in the future, saving time and unnecessary administration with future orders."

Once the order is placed, the quotation effectively becomes the engineering specification and the manufacturing process. Required material stock levels that may be utilized are identified – vital for cost control and cash flow - and machine production parameters are set. Once manufacturing is complete, PSL Datatrack generates delivery notes and certifications that can trace the finished component all the way back to the raw materials supplier- vital especially for aerospace and automotive customers.

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“The PSL Datatrack system generates documentation for customers in a highly professional and consistent way in line with our corporate image. There is no doubt in my mind that our customers are impressed by this approach. In a competitive world, this also helps to give us an edge,” says Jonathan. “Tasks such as printing off a delivery note, for example, are also now very easy and the quote can be simply adjusted if there are any customer changes to the jobs.”

PSL Datatrack is designed for implementation in manageable pieces, which is vital to growing companies. Shortly after introducing the Sales Module, PTP added the PSL Datatrack Purchasing and Goods Received Modules to cover purchase orders, goods received, materials and components stocks. Whilst scheduling at PTP is a manual system - as there are a relatively low number of machine tools involved - should the number increase, PTP would add the PSL Datatrack scheduling module.

Overall Jonathan Newis believes that the amount of administration work covered by the PSL Datatrack modules would be astronomical if it had to be done manually: “To be able to give a fast price on the same, or next day, makes us very efficient and cuts out non-productive time – so important in today's economic climate.”

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