



FYLDE CNC SPECIALISTS GROWTH AND SUCCESS BUILT ON SOLID ADMINISTRATION FOUNDATIONS

When in May 2014, Fylde CNC Specialists relocated to its brand new facility in Kirkham, Lancashire, the platform was established to further develop this highly successful and respected precision turning and milling subcontract engineering business. The new £1.2 million investment features the latest CNC machining technology and tool management systems in a state of the art development. Long before the move, in January 2011, the company had started to lay the foundations for its future expansion through investment in PSL Datatrack production control software.

“Having recognised our customer and supplier administration procedures as areas of weakness and a potential hindrance to our plans for growth, we knew we needed to address them,” says Julie Fairclough, Office Manager at Fylde CNC Specialists. “Our record keeping was half manual and half computerised, using Excel spreadsheets. Retrieving information about our customers and the status of their orders was very difficult and time consuming. It was the same situation when looking for information on or from our suppliers. This was not sustainable for the business that we wanted to attract.”



With a large base of global customers from sectors as diverse as the automotive and aerospace industries, the scientific and medical manufacturing markets, the electronics and telecoms sectors as well as the pneumatic and hydraulic engineering industries, Fylde CNC Specialists success has been based around its ability to listen carefully to what customers want and deliver on time exactly the solution that they require. With typical batch sizes ranging from hundreds to hundreds of thousands, tight control of manufacturing/assembly processes and the supply chain is essential. Control needed to be maintained and managed carefully as the business grew and more demands were put on administrative procedures.

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Prospec Systems Limited
Lily Hill House,
Lily Hill Road,
Bracknell,
Berkshire. RG12 2SJ

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Excellence in production control and administration for manufacturing businesses

Web: www.psldatatrack.com

Tel: 08456 345931

Email: sales@psldatatrack.com

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The search for a suitable solution led to PSL Datatrack, with its long track record in supplying modular production control software systems to the engineering sub-contracting industry. "We were looking for an off the shelf system with the flexibility to be customised to exactly what we needed and to grow with us," says Julie. "For us, this initially meant a package that could cover the fundamentals such as generating our customer quotations professionally, cost centre reporting, the raising of purchase orders, the monitoring of goods in/out, works orders and generally help us to manage and track key information we use in our manufacturing processes."



In the three years leading up to the company relocation to the new premises, Fylde CNC Specialists gained great experience using PSL Datatrack and the company was provided with extensive support & on-site training to ensure the potential of the software was maximised. Once the initial system was providing benefit to the business the company invested in additional modules including Gauge Calibration and Non-Conformance. "With automotive sector customers, for example, quality and traceability are absolutely essential - right back to the raw materials that we use. Finding information for our customers was often difficult and time consuming but with PSL Datatrack we now have the facility to present certificates of conformity to our customers very easily by retrieving them at the click of a mouse," says Julie. "In general terms, our control over our suppliers is much more efficient too as we can easily recall details of what materials we have historically ordered and the costs involved. Long gone are the days of hand written notes!"

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Other advantages of the PSL Datatrack system are based around its ability to provide real time and management information. For example, feedback on machine tool performance allows the company's management to intervene if necessary and make adjustments to machine settings to provide optimum results.

For more efficient day to day running, the Time and Attendance module has allowed the company to dispense with analogue clocking in and out by staff and with manual calculations of hours worked. Instead, the module produces reports on employee hours worked and is used for payroll calculations. Another benefit is that at the customer invoicing stage, PSL Datatrack links to the company's Sage accounts system, avoiding the need for any manual input of critical financial information.

There are now over 30 employees at Fylde CNC Specialists and in some departments at the new facility there are as many as five full time users of the PSL Datatrack system, underlining its importance to the company in so many different areas. This is the case on the shop floor, where the Shop Floor Data Collection (SFDC) module records activity including the progress of works orders, as well as non-productive periods and downtime. There are other facets of PSL Datatrack which have yet to be fully utilised, such as the Sequential Scheduler module which can plan effective workflows for the whole of Fylde CNC Specialists operation.

After 17 years in business, and having outgrown the old premises, Fylde CNC Specialists relocated into a new facility, which provides under one roof, an environment of quality, efficiency and innovation. It gives the company all it needs to accommodate more business and sustain its impressive growth. The company will continue to be a supplier of choice and attract new customers through its policy of continued investment in the latest CNC technology.

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The new Hurco VM20i multi axis machining centre and Citizen L20 sliding head lathes form part of a highly impressive plant list including state of the art tool management and environmental systems. "Supporting all of this, PSL Datatrack helps to bring the whole operation together in an accessible, easy to use system that has provided the foundation for our continued success," concludes Julie Fairclough.

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Berkshire. RG12 2SJ

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