SEYCHELL PROFITS FROM REAL TIME INFORMATION WITH STATUS BOARD DISPLAYS

Seychell Engineering has added the Status Board display system to the PSL Datatrack production control software modules used to run the company's business. All jobs that pass through the shop floor on a daily basis are now presented as clear visual information with action lists and alerts to shop floor operators, ensuring they are dealt with at the right time and in the correct sequence. As a result, customer deliveries are more punctual than ever before, fulfilling one of the company's essential Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Since acquiring Seychell five years ago, owner Roger Williams has transformed its profitability and grown the thriving subcontract engineering business through the establishment of new KPIs. These are being met thanks to major improvements in the company's IT, administration, marketing, branding and engineering processes. He recognised early on that the company's existing PSL Datatrack software could be core to the future success of the company if used correctly and to its full potential. Its functionality and modularity also meant that further investments could be made as the company grew.

At the outset, it was identified that a serious shortcoming in the company's business was the ability to manage production time, resources and machine processes on the shop floor. There was no way of knowing whether customer quotations bore any resemblance to costs and therefore whether a specific job was actually profitable. As this was one of the KPIs, this clearly had to be addressed.

Initially, PSL Datatrack was set up and used to store all the key information about Seychell's production processes for the subcontract manufacture of ferrous and non-ferrous metal components, as well as plastics and ceramics, for customers in the industrial, scientific, medical, aerospace, marine and motorsport industries. Supplying various sized machined parts and large fabrications as one off specials, or as high quantity repeat orders, meant that the accuracy and speed of dealing with quotations and subsequent order processing was of fundamental importance.

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Since 2013 there has been continuous investment in PSL Datatrack modules and these are now being used to their full potential. Together with Quotations, eight other modules are used on a daily basis including Sales/Works Orders, Purchasing, Shop Floor Data Collection, Invoicing, Sequential Scheduling, Job Costing, Non Conformance and Gauge Calibration. These have all helped to improve the efficiency of Seychell's production processes, provide a highly accurate method of pricing any component or fabrication, give accurate comparisons between actual costs and quotations and enable variances to be addressed quickly.

The Sequential Scheduler module plans the production flow for the entire factory. It schedules the complete manufacturing process for the large number of jobs completed on a daily basis, breaking each one down by the materials to be used, the required machining processes and times as well as any outside subcontract processes. The time and cost for each step is calculated by PSL Datatrack and through the generation of reports the company can review each job in detail. The Non Conformance module tracks any production issues which may have affected the job and how they have been dealt with.

The versatile Gauge Calibration module is used to highlight which tools or machines needs recalibrating and to set the frequency of machine servicing. "To meet health and safety regulations, as well as maintaining our ISO 9001 accreditation and various customer quality approval certificates, this is vital information. Not only that, but by carefully controlling machine maintenance and recalibration schedules, we can be more efficient and ensure we maximise our production capacity for profitability," says Roger.

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For Roger, one of the big advantages of using PSL Datatrack has been the ability to generate bespoke programs and reports which are critical to Seychell's achievement of its KPIs. For example, a request for reports on profitability by individual order was addressed through PSL Datatrack's customer wish list programme. "PSL Datatrack as a company is very responsive in terms of special requests and their overall customer support has been fantastic," says Roger.

Whilst they may not be the final piece in the PSL Datatrack jigsaw for Seychell, the investment in the two Status Boards for use on the shop floor and a third in the programming section of the company has been a vital investment. "Having all the information from the Sequential Scheduler on a dynamic visual display is an essential means of communication. Like the PSL Datatrack software in general, the Status Boards have been well embraced by everyone. Our business is run on KPIs and achieving those as well as controlling our business in general is now much easier. It makes us more efficient and thanks to remote access I can look conveniently at our overall performance or specific aspects of it at any time and from anywhere away from the business," concludes Roger.