

CASE STUDY:

SWITCHCRAFT TAPLIN LTD



7 LICENSE

June 2003
Evaluation Workshop

Aug/Oct 2003
Staff Trained

Feb 2004
System Live

Significant reduction in admin overhead

Stock control/valuation much more accurate

System complies with ISO9000 requirements

Ability to scale up and down licenses as needed

Excellent training and easy implementation

Less than one call per month to tech support

Much better reporting with drill-down capabilities

Smooth transition and upgrade to latest version

Initial training costs of £4970

Low monthly rental of £530

Switchcraft Taplin Ltd, based in Southampton, manufactures industrial and commercial electrical systems, dealing increasingly in the marine industry. The company was previously a manufacturing division within a larger organisation, at which time they had a comprehensive computer system covering all aspects of the overall business. When they downsized after a management buyout they used that experience to assess their manufacturing software requirements. John Monks, Managing Director said; *"At that time we had created some sophisticated spreadsheets, which worked up to a point but were becoming increasingly labour intensive. We had no stock control or real knowledge of stock value; we would manually count on a three monthly basis and do a major stock take at the end of the year. It was difficult to get information quickly and accurately, and it was also hard to get variations of data that would help you to better understand your business. We decided to look at an MRP system but found the cost prohibitive. We didn't need an all 'bells and whistles' system, and we don't have a great deal of personnel that could spend time on it."*

The company had been aware of 123insight virtually since its foundation in 2000, and decided to take a look at the system in 2003. John noted; *"We attended a presentation on 123insight that gave us a pretty good overview of the system. The appeal for us was that it was advertised as an MRP system that was also suited to smaller companies and supplied on an economical basis. It was a far better approach than others - quite refreshing and open. Having been involved with computer companies in the past there is a concern with the sales approach that you are never quite sure if things are heading in the direction you want. The other systems we considered all had a minimum startup cost of £20k plus."*

Switchcraft Taplin decided to select 123insight in June 2003. Two staff attended the user, administration and implementation training between August and October, with the system going live early February 2004. Of the training and implementation John commented; *"The training was very good. The way it was organised is that you got an overview to start with and then went into the detail. We received an implementation chart which was very useful - we followed it and went live on schedule. Going live was a reasonably organised experience - we ran parallel for a couple of weeks and then went fully live."*

After going live the company noticed several improvements. With 123insight now providing stock information it also gave immediate visibility of stock valuation. *"This was a big plus, as we have a massive range of products and are having to keep more stock. Many distributors that should keep stock do not do so, and have long lead times on certain items, so we can now identify this easily and modify stock levels accordingly. Also, we have continually been able to reduce the administration requirements to the point that our buyer operate the MRP as well, which is a significant overhead saving."*

The former company was one of the first in the UK to hold what became ISO9000 accreditation. Switchcraft Taplin decided that, whilst they would work to the standard they would not become accredited, however John cited that all the tools are in place with 123insight should they decide to become accredited.

In 2008 the company upgraded to version 7, which John found straightforward. *"There wasn't a great deal of difficulty at all. What we've found is that you need an initial understanding of the key changes, but if the changes are only slight then it's actually better to just get going and feed the new information to people as they go along."*

Since implementing 123insight Switchcraft Taplin has taken advantage of the license scalability, varying from five to nine licenses, and are currently on seven. John concluded; "Given our experience of high end production management systems 123insight has fully met our expectations for our needs. Since we first started with 123insight it has become more comprehensive and easier to use. You can drill down in the system to get the information you need. It's heading in the right direction as far as we are concerned."