

CASE STUDY:

THERMAL ENGINEERING LIMITED



 8 LICENSES

Several systems combined to give a single system

Quality procedures now written around 123insight

Job costs calculated faster, rather than taking weeks

Stock now traceable, reducing time searching

Stock takes no longer stop production for three days

Staff freed up to perform more proactive duties

Bar code system reduces errors and aids data entry

No initial price barrier, with shorter training period

Full implementation cost only £2700



Thermal Engineering Ltd, based in Cullompton, Devon manufactures a range of specialist cooling systems for industrial, agricultural and medical applications. Their previous production management systems consisted of a custom-written Access database, a proprietary time capturing system and several unrelated Excel spreadsheets. Joe Gasan, Managing Director said; *"We had a combination of different manual systems in place, which were not interlinked, lacked depth of information and consequently were prone to error. I had conducted a 12-month search and was literally at the point of signing a £30k order when the 123insight information landed on my desk. I still wasn't sure about purchasing a system where the support cost was actually greater than the system cost itself, so I gave it a look. For the first time in my career I rang a supplier on the strength of the information in their literature!"*

Joe attended an Evaluation Workshop in late August 2002, which was followed up with an on-site demonstration shortly afterwards. Barely two weeks later Thermal Engineering signed up for 8 licenses and immediately booked three key staff on a training course. Of the training Joe said; *"None of us had any current MRP experience, so MRP was a completely new way of thinking for us, but after the three day course it made sense. After the implementation day later that month I made myself the 'Product Champion', training all staff that had not attended a course, resolving any misunderstandings etc."*

Installing an MRP system forces a company to closely examine the ways they currently run their business, and Joe took this opportunity to completely restructure their product part numbering system. *"Our part numbers used to have anywhere up to 30 characters, which were a mixture of letters and numbers. We decided to restructure this down to a 7 digit code. This process delayed us by three months, but it was certainly worthwhile. We set a target date of Q2 2003 to go live, and the changeover occurred on schedule on the 1st of April."*

After going live the most noticeable difference was visibility of information. Joe added; *"We had an unheard of transparency of information across the company. Previously, when a job was shipped costing the job would take some weeks - someone would need to collate all the hours associated with the job, find all purchases and other costs and then tally it all together. Now data is realtime. The purchasing workload has also greatly reduced, to the extent that this person now has the time to proactively chase suppliers for deliveries. 123insight generates a supplier schedule report that we send to suppliers, so missing orders are quickly identified."*

Stock control has also seen several improvements, not least when it came to stock-taking. Prior to 123insight the company ceased production for three days to perform stocktaking. Stocktakes are now done in a day using three barcode scanners. Now that stock is more accurate substantial savings have been made due to previously wasted time looking for stock. Commented Joe; *"Members of staff could waste 3-4 hours due to material shortages or looking for stock - we're probably saving the cost of one shopfloor worker!"*

As an ISO9000-2000 accredited organisation, Thermal Engineering now base their quality manuals on 123insight because of its audit trail. Joe finished by saying; "We have ambitious growth plans for the future, but we could not have done it without the solid foundation that 123insight has delivered, leaving us to concentrate on running our business. 123insight rivalled all of the other products we evaluated without the price barrier - I couldn't believe how easy it was to obtain the system."