

Machinery Market

November 2007

MRP system installed in less than three weeks

Welshpool-based Cobra UK Automotive Ltd produces niche products for the automotive interior-trim market. With customers that include Volvo and Bentley, the company maintains the highest quality standards, and it has won several business achievement awards. Until last year, its production management system comprised a series of spreadsheets, which were difficult to maintain and prone to human error.

Operations director Nick English says: "We looked at various MRP and ERP systems costing up to £80,000, intending to select the one that was best suited to a company with high growth plans. We were then introduced to Rent-IT's 123mrp.NET by our local Business Link office, which held an evaluation workshop in July 2006. We were very impressed with what this system offered, but we were also quite sceptical. The offer of only paying for the training if we took up the system seemed to be too good to be true."

With a factory move planned for early in 2007, Cobra decided to take up 123mrp.NET in November, with two members of staff attending the five-day training course. The last day of training was 13 December, and Cobra decided to implement the system over the Christmas break to minimise down-time. "Although Rent-IT provided facilities over the break, we didn't need to use them. We just followed the implementation plan and went live on 2 January without a hitch."

What was immediately noticeable was the visibility of works orders throughout the business, along with the accuracy of stock amount and values. "We could see the purchase orders that needed to be raised and could prioritise the work through the factory much better, rather than rely-

ing on memory. As we manufacture to order, we don't hold much stock, so as long as lead times are accurate and we purchase on time, we can maintain a low stock amount. The traceability that 123mrp.NET provides also helps us to comply with our quality standards."

The amount of paper-work being generated was reduced, as stock, purchases and works orders were all on one system, allowing for immediate reconciliation; general errors were also reduced. Mr English says: "123mrp.NET gave us what we needed, and with business expected to double each year for the next two or three years, the flexible licensing will play a big part, because we can buy licences as and when we need them. The beauty of it is that you don't have a large up-front cost burden at the start of the implementation, when you have the greatest risk of failure."

