

Time to mould a new future on rented production system

If you're a manufacturing SME contemplating a move to an MRPII-based system from spreadsheets or the like, or if your current ERP implementation project isn't working out, it might be time to consider renting a service instead.

Northern Irish injection moulding company Canyon Europe did exactly that. Its sales, production and stock control were managed through a series of spreadsheets, and it had been evaluating a system, which it says would have cost £65,000 plus 18% annual maintenance costs, for six months.



It was going nowhere fast, so when Graeme Bennett, plant and business development manager, saw a 15 minute video of the 123MRP rental system, from RentIT, he decided to try it, "as there was no risk involved."

Two staff attended training courses; the decision was made to install SQL 2000 database over Access tables to accommodate planned expansion, and two months later Bennett started installation himself. He hadn't been on the training courses, but says the documentation, internal assistance from trained users and 123MRP telephone support was enough.

The result: all the benefits of good MRP, plus visibility of information across the business. Errors associated with the traditional workflow process disappeared overnight, he says.

Beyond those, paperwork previously generated and tracked was halved, since users could

access and send information electronically, and stock control moved to a rolling stock-take of a few items. "As a direct result, stock-holding of WIP components has been reduced by 30% – about £28,000 per month."

Bennett says the firm is now operating a Just-In-Time stock-holding policy, and adds: "Planning used to be a full-time role but staff handling that now have time for other duties. Our customers now tell us ... we have a system that is providing them with solid, reliable information."

The cost: total implementation cost to go live was £3,750, and the monthly rental fee is £300. "If we'd have spent £65,000 on a system that did not work out, that would have caused us a major problem. We were able to test the system's suitability at minimal cost and risk – and we're paying less now than the maintenance of comparable systems."