Percival Aviation Ltd, based in Fareham, Hampshire, manufactures a wide range of aircraft interior products for companies such as Airbus, British Airways and Emirates. In 2004, when 123insight was first implemented, the company’s main focus was on aircraft seating, however they have since diversified its range considerably. Said Neil Percival, CEO; “We’ve been manufacturing more complex components, still including ‘cut and sew’, but we’re now also manufacturing metal and composite parts, along with many more complex components for aircraft interiors. All of these use the system to create BOMs and manage the production through our workshops. We’ve also acquired a lot of new customers in that time as well, including significant growth in the Middle East.”

Turnover has increased by over 260% from £2.45m in 2005 to £6.5m in 2014, and although their 123insight licence count has increased from 8 seats to 28 the number of staff has remained constant at 50. Neil cites that this demonstrates the spread and reliance on 123insight across the business; “Basically everyone who has a computer on their desk also has 123insight. We’re using it from enquiry all the way through to engineering, where we create bills of materials etc, and into production. Everyone in production that has a computer also uses the system, right the way through to despatch.”

The company saw initial improvements in lead times after going live, but over the years, despite diversifying their manufacturing methods and producing more complex products, lead times have continued to remain constant. Said Neil; “Typically it’s four weeks from receipt of order to shipping, so we are certainly in control of our goods inwards, stock and manufacturing all the way through to inspection and despatch.”

**Key Benefits/Changes:**
- Turnover up 260% with no change in staff overhead
- 123insight is the backbone of their quality systems
- Stock turns of over 8 times per year, due to better stock management
- Requested features delivered in updates
- 123insight training courses aimed at specific job roles
- Lead times constant despite more complex product range

*In 2004 Percival Aviation selected 123insight over systems costing £80k. After going live in 15 weeks the company saw reductions in stock, paper usage, lead times and errors. CEO Neil Percival stated at the time; “123insight appeared to do 99% of what we wanted, and even more so today”. As part of our ‘10 years on’ series we revisited Percival Aviation to see how the company has diversified and the positive effects that 123insight continues to have on the business.”*
Stock levels have also significantly reduced, with Neil citing that the company now turns stock over around 8 times per year; “Our stock has definitely reduced relative to turnover. Previously I doubt that we were even turning it over once or twice a year before 123insight.”

The stores department is also taking advantage of the ability to use handheld tablets for performing day-to-day functions such as checking stock availability.

In 2008 the company investigated implementing the AS9100 and EASA aerospace quality accreditations, and Neil discovered that 123insight already provided him with a system he could use as a framework to manage them; “When we started with 123insight we didn’t have AS9100, and it was a requirement for many of our customers at the time. We implemented 123insight with the intent of creating greater control within our manufacturing processes which, to be frank, we didn’t have prior to implementation. Now we have full traceability along with the comprehensive business metrics that AS9100 requires of us, all provided by one system.”

Although paperwork initially decreased massively, the subsequent requirement for providing QA documentation has increased their paper output, however Neil notes that obtaining it is not an issue; “Being an aerospace company we’re paperwork-hungry. We do tend to produce a lot of paperwork, however we are receiving all of the information from the system - we are not having to go outside of it to create anything.”

Percival Aviation originally went live with version 4 of the software back in 2004. In 2015 they are running version 10, and they have seen many significant features provided under the monthly subscription, including some that they requested. For example, capacity planning was initially displayed as a percentage figure - they requested this to be also be shown in hours, with the feature becoming available in a subsequent release at no additional cost.

Neil noted another requested feature affecting purchasing and quoting that has delivered significant time savings, along with knock on benefits to his customers; “In our business we have a lot of different batch sizes that customers request of us, and quite frequently we’d be quoting for minimum order quantities, for both small and large orders. We found that we had slight issues with quantifying materials that we were buying in to produce a bill of materials, so we
asked 123insight if they could put in a 'What If button', which they did very quickly.” The ‘What If’ functionality allows purchasing quantity price breaks to be taken into consideration when costing for different quantities. “That button now provides total control of our costs when considering materials that we are buying in, which may also have price breaks that we need to pass on to our customer.”

Percival Aviation has required very little in the way of support, meeting the 123insight average of one call per customer per month. Over the last decade 123insight has introduced a dedicated Customer Care team that regularly meet with customers and provide face-to-face advice over and above the support provided by the Help Desk, which Neil has found very useful. “I think the main thing that it clarified for us was the need for extra training. We went from 8 licences to 28 and we did have a period where people were probably not as confident using the system as they should have been. So our Customer Care person has been instrumental in helping those particular people on the right training courses that suit their job requirements.”

“We look back on the relationship with 123insight and it’s been great for us - we are very happy. Quite honestly, it does feel like 123insight is just a part of our business.”

“We have people that fulfil particular functions, and it’s very useful that they can go on a training course that is relevant to their job rather than being trained on things that are probably not of interest to them - otherwise they’re probably going to switch off.”

The company continues to see growth, and Neil concludes that the 123insight subscription model still works extremely well for them; “When we looked at 123insight along with other more traditional competition, we were looking at budgets of more than £80k in 2005 against the offering that 123insight was giving us. £80k at that time was completely unaffordable, so we saw 123insight as a fantastic opportunity to introduce a software package that we could afford. We look back on the relationship with 123insight and it’s been great for us - we’re very happy. Quite honestly, it does feel like 123insight is just a part of our business. With a lot of other suppliers we have faceless contact with them. We don’t have knowledge of them as individuals, however with 123 Insight from the top down we know the people, meet them regularly and feel that there is something of a friendship beyond the business relationship.”

123 Insight Ltd break training down into six days, covering the complete core system and split over commercial, engineering, production & MRP, and system, administration & finance. This allowed Neil to select training relevant to an individual’s role;