CASE STUDY
Enterprise resource planning

Plex Manufacturing Cloud

CLIENT BACKGROUND:

Headquartered in Lake Zurich, IL, Termax Corporation is a dynamic manufacturing and engineering company specializing in metal and plastic fastener solutions. While it primarily serves the automotive industry, Termax provides quality engineered clips and fasteners to many other industries such as appliances, lighting, toys, construction, and automotive aftermarket providers. It specializes in precision metal stamping and plastic injection molding operations, including roll alloy stamping, and over molding.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE:

Termax faced antiquated software on an aging hardware platform. Because the application could not provide inventory or lot control management nor support visibility into its outside service providers, many core business processes had to be done manually. They saw their need as updating or replacing their software solution and potentially replacing the hardware infrastructure. They began by assembling their core requirements of "must haves" across their entire business, including:

— Gain visibility into its outside service providers of heating and plating treatments to track inventory location and movement
— Improve shop floor process to allow better visibility to scheduling and material availability
— Eliminate reliance on many incongruent spreadsheets and offline databases
— Use an integrated ERP system to drive shop floor scheduling, purchasing and shipping
— Implement EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) with its largest customers
— Improve reporting at all levels
— Enhance inventory traceability through bar coding
— Achieve more powerful data mining and visibility
— Automate workflow processes for purchasing, sales and engineering
— Get quality, real-time information from the shop floor including Statistical Process Control (SPC)

THE BAKER TILLY APPROACH:

Termax evaluated the option of upgrading their existing software and hardware platform versus several new ERP solutions. All options required a concomitant investment in hardware, software, and operating infrastructure. Plex Systems, Inc. introduced its ERP solution, Plex Online and Baker Tilly to Termax, to assist with training and implementation and the integration of many previously manual processes into the Plex System.

Applying its four-phase implementation methodology, the Baker Tilly team "developed the plan and stuck to the plan," stated IS director Mike Ossi. Baker Tilly implemented the Plex Online business solution at Termax across the following business processes:

— Sales (quotation)
— Manufacturing planning and scheduling
— Purchasing (RAW and component)
— Inventory management
— Quality management

- Finance/accounting
- Shipping/receiving
- Human resources
- Customer service – EDI, order management
- Engineering parts designs and management, and change management

The project – implemented as a "big bang" approach – began in June and went live in December of that same year, following a final four weeks of extensive testing. The majority of the functionality of Plex Online was put to use on day one. While acknowledging the challenges of the big bang approach, Termax wanted to avoid the dual data entry and the necessity of managing two systems that a phased module-by-module approach would entail.

THE BUSINESS IMPACT:

- Improved responsiveness to customer service calls
- EDI has saved countless hours of managing customer releases
- Improved management of the injection molding processes, which couldn't be done previously
- Real-time production reporting has improved management of daily work orders
- Bar coding and labeling has improved inventory accuracy and visibility
- Shipping has greater visibility into the ship schedule for greater efficiency
- Outside service processing is quicker and more efficient than with the previous system
- Quality processes are integrated in Plex to ensure compliance with TS standards
- Streamlined communication with key suppliers
- Eliminated reliance on manual procedures
- Eliminated IT costs and support for hardware/software upgrades, modification management, backups, or disaster recovery

Post go-live projects with Baker Tilly included adding the Plex tooling and maintenance modules, and aiding Termax in reviewing processes and procedures to maximize the use of Plex Online.

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