



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

CLIENT: Acucote

INDUSTRY: Manufacturing - pressure-sensitive label stock

CHALLENGE: Manufacturing production data was not being accurately recorded in Acucote's ERP system, Fourth Shift, making productivity analysis and improvement extremely difficult.

SOLUTION: Cygil utilized in-depth understanding of manufacturing processes and ERP expertise to custom develop an easy to use shop floor data collection system that integrates directly with the ERP system and provides bar-coded automatic label printing capabilities.

OVERVIEW

Acucote is one of the world's leading manufacturers of pressure-sensitive label stock with headquarters in Graham, North Carolina and distribution facilities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Texas and California.

Although they spent millions of dollars modernizing their plants, vital manufacturing information such as what inventory was consumed from what location, what material was produced in what quantity, and where it was stored was written on sheets of paper by shop floor operators and transmitted to accounting for hand-keying into Acucote's ERP system. The lack of automation surrounding the process of consumption and production data capture resulted in a number of productivity drains, systemically inaccurate inventory figures and an overall inability to effectively analyze productivity and plan accordingly.

When Acucote decided to improve productivity by eliminating these inefficient processes, they turned to Cygil for help. Having worked with Cygil for five years, Acucote knew they could count on Cygil's deep and broad understanding of not only their information systems but of the actual manufacturing process as well.

COATER INTERFACE

Cygil began with a study of exactly what information was captured on paper by the floor operators and how it was routed and entered into Fourth Shift. Based on these findings, Cygil determined that the greatest productivity gains could be realized through the creation of a shop floor data collection system that integrates directly with the ERP system and provides bar-coded automatic label printing capabilities. All raw materials used to create adhesive-coated rolls of label stock pass through this system, called the Coater Interface.

A major factor in the Coater Interface's success is the ease with which it allows shop floor operators to capture manufacturing information. Because shop floor operators are not accustomed to data entry, Cygil took great pains to design a simple and easy to use interface that requires operators to enter only new data—inventory consumption and production details associated with the work they produce.

The most significant productivity gains are achieved by eliminating the laborious and error-prone hand-entering of written data into Acucote's ERP system. The Coater Interface loads data captured during the manufacturing process into the ERP system, Fourth Shift, in real-time, eliminating the manual keying of the information and the errors associated with that process.

Great gains were also made by including automatic label printing in the application. Again, automatically capturing the order data from the ERP system and the Coater Interface along with integrating it with the label printer reduced labor costs and increased accuracy. Additionally, Cygil used the opportunity to introduce bar-coding on the labels, enabling Acucote to begin efficient cycle counting for inventory. The labels can be accurately cycle-counted and rolls of processed materials can be consumed automatically by bar code scanners in subsequent manufacturing steps.



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RESULTS

The Coater Interface, from the shop floor interface to automated label printing, promotes accurate, timely, and efficient capture of inventory and production data. While Acucote realized direct productivity gains from less burdensome documentation processes, the Coater Interface also facilitated additional productivity gains. Once all of this data was automatically and accurately collected and put into the ERP system, a world of analytical possibilities emerged. Using Crystal Reports, Cygil designed reports that analyze throughput from several different perspectives—per shift, per product-type, per time period, and basic scrap reporting, all of which allow Acucote to better understand their processes and where improvements can be made.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Acucote's investment in the Coater interface was repaid in just a few months through a combination of productivity directly gained, better visibility to their overall manufacturing productivity, and a more accurate accounting of inventory.
