



Smarter Design. Happier Customers.

Sturgis Molded Products Company Optimizes Efficiency with Real-time Intelligent Enterprise Software from IQMS

Retrofit or Replace

For Michigan-based Sturgis Molded Products Company (SMP), a foremost injection molder, success comes down to two things: precision and agility. Founded by a toolmaker forty years ago, SMP serves a number of high-demand markets, including the medical, automotive, consumer, industrial, and heavy truck industries, providing quality molded parts and components according to a diverse range of customer specifications and shipment protocols. Within this dynamic framework, SMP must be meticulous in its manufacturing performance and nimble in its ability to optimize plant operations. This is why in June 2003 SMP sought to upgrade its dated, multi-system ERP software.

"We were getting to the point where our previous system could not support company growth," said Carol MacDonald, IS manager at SMP. "We also wanted to move to a true Windows-based solution and add a quality system and preventative maintenance software."

However, after assessing the cost to retrofit its old ERP system, and acknowledging the number of third-party vendors it would take to fulfill the company's growing business needs, MacDonald and others at SMP agreed: The company needed a single-source solution that would enable it to exceed its customers' quality and delivery expectations, while gaining operational efficiencies that would directly benefit SMP's bottom line.

Single-Source Solution, Improved Efficiency Across the Board

SMP considered several ERP options before purchasing EnterpriseIQ along with the EDI, Warehouse Management, and RealTime Production Monitoring modules. SMP liked that EnterpriseIQ covered all of its ERP needs with one cohesive system, and that additional functionality could be added as needed without the use of third party software. The company went live with IQMS in May 2004, and has since seen benefit in almost every sector of its business, from tooling and production to customer support and product delivery.

"Our goal for the new ERP system was to improve efficiency in a number of areas," said MacDonald. "For example, our old bar coding software used as many as 12 different databases, which made it easy for a press operator to inadvertently choose the wrong label. The IQMS ShopData feature and Warehouse Management module eliminates the guesswork, making it easy to simultaneously manage bar coding for multiple customers. We saw that as a real value, and it's just one of the reasons we switched to IQMS."



The Company

Founded in 1966, Michigan-based Sturgis Molded Products Company (SMP) is a one-stop shop for cost-effective, "total solutions molding," providing, in addition to full service tool production, innovative plastic injection molding solutions to the medical, automotive, consumer, industrial, and heavy truck industries. Widely recognized for its expertise, SMP offers superior tool design, production, prototyping, engineering, and scientific molding, as well as full product launch support and a number of quality processes such as metal-to-plastic conversion, insert molding, and in-mold film processing.

Another critical area where SMP sought to gain efficiencies was in the company's ability to deliver improved EDI capabilities. In the past, SMP had to manage a manual import/export process between its EDI and ERP applications, a task that lumbered under any variances or changes a customer might request.

"The IQMS EDI Module has enabled us to greatly accelerate EDI turnaround through automation, and it's given us the flexibility we need to customize our processes and data reporting to fulfill individual specifications," said MacDonald. "With EDI in place, we have more control over the order process, which has allowed us to save as much as 95% in expedited freight costs because we can better manage customer change requests."

As a single-source solution, EnterpriseIQ requires data to be entered into the system only once. This has allowed SMP to eliminate excess data entry and improve the speed and accuracy of internal reporting. With efficiency gains in these areas, SMP has cut its month-end close time more than 75%. EnterpriseIQ has also enabled SMP to gain efficiencies through better preventative maintenance, reducing repair time as much as 75% to gain 20% more press time.

Real Benefit, Now and Into the Future

EnterpriseIQ has helped SMP to improve how it manages the complexities of its business and enabled the company to better serve its goal of providing total solutions molding. SMP has a bigger sales volume now than it had when it was using its old ERP system, and the company has been able to manage this volume with a more efficient organizational structure. The efficiencies SMP has gained using EnterpriseIQ not only translate into real benefit for the company, but also for its customers.

"Potential customers are attracted to our real-time capabilities and the fact that we have an ERP system that touches all the various disciplines of our organization from quoting through accounts receivables," explained Christopher Emery, vice president of sales at SMP. "Our current customers are equally impressed with the way IQMS supports our goal of 100% on-time delivery."

SMP's customers aren't the only ones who are impressed. SMP's president, Mark Weishaar, believes the return on investment the company has seen since installing the system have made the company's organizational structure not only more efficient, but better poised for long-term growth.

"EnterpriseIQ delivers timely information to the right people at the right time. And that holds true whether you look at it from my perspective of overseeing the entire operation, or from that of one of our associates managing an injection molding machine on the shop floor," Weishaar explained. "With EnterpriseIQ, we are all working within the same data set at the same time. And that's impressive because it not only gives us more control over our day-to-day operations, but it also affords us the clarity to see how far into the future we can grow our business."

Return on Investment

- Reduced expedited freight costs approximately 95%
- Accelerated EDI turnaround
- Reduced repair time by 75%
- Eliminated excess data entry
- Improved internal and customer communications
- Cut month-end close time as much as 75%
- Gained 20% more press time through preventative maintenance

Software

EnterpriseIQ™ ERP software system, including: RealTime Production, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and Warehouse Management modules.

Hardware

Oracle database with windows-based server platform.



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