



TriStar Strengthens its Position with Saint-Gobain Using SYSPRO Software

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At a Glance

TriStar Plastics Corp.

Shrewsbury, Massachusetts

CHALLENGE:

TriStar Plastics Corp. is a supplier of plastics stock shapes. The company made yield calculations from full plastic sheets manually. It is extremely complex to handle changing shapes, costs and sizes of stock shapes and manage inventory at the same time. TriStar needed a software system that offered inventory tracking, yield calculations and the return of remnants to stock.

The Company

TriStar Plastics Corp., a supplier of high performance plastics materials, recently made headlines by announcing the signing of an exclusive distribution agreement with Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics Corporation, a division of France-based industrial giant Saint-Gobain and one of the world's largest manufacturers of plastic bearings. Under the terms of the new pact, TriStar becomes the exclusive master distributor for the Saint-Gobain Rulon® bearing line in Canada and the entire U.S., with the exception of North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nebraska and Iowa.

According to TriStar CEO Richard Cedrone, the exclusive accord with Saint-Gobain was earned on past performance, as well as several other factors, including the establishment of a new TriStar sales and distribution office in Elk Grove Village, Ill., a centralized U.S. location from which to serve existing customers and build future business. TriStar was challenged to secure a location, establish the office, arrange for staffing and install the computer software necessary to conduct business and coordinate operations with TriStar company headquarters in Shrewsbury, MA, and the company's Yorba Linda, CA, and Charlotte, NC locations.

Cedrone stated, "We not only committed to a fast track time-frame, but also countered by saying that TriStar would have the office up and running and the computer network in place within a day after occupying the space." Cedrone had reason to be confident. He ascertained that office space and staffing were available, but, most importantly, he says, "I knew our SYSPRO software was highly scalable and that it would enable us to easily add

new users in less than one day. Also, I felt the user-friendliness of the software would enable new hires to become proficient very quickly." Cedrone, in fact, was speaking with experience.

The Challenge

Cedrone's history is one of getting the job done. TriStar had been using a "home grown" computer system to handle inventory tracking as well as accounting, manufacturing and distribution. A supplier of stock shapes, TriStar made yield calculations from full plastic sheets manually and more often than not never returned scraps to inventory. Explains Richard Cedrone, CEO of TriStar, "Yield calculations on numerous line items is a very time consuming process. It is extremely complex to handle ever changing shapes, costs and sizes of stock shapes while properly managing inventory at the same time."

In late 1999, it was apparent to TriStar that its "home grown" software system had become inefficient and inadequate. It could no longer handle a growing and increasingly complex operation that involves a state-of-the-art fabrication facility, composite bearing manufacturing, inventory tracking, yield calculations and the return of remnants to stock. Since the company had already been "burned" by one Enterprise Resource Planning software vendor that failed to abide by contractual agreements, it hired a consultant to investigate and recommend a more suitable ERP software solution. SYSPRO ERP software was one of the enterprise software solutions on the recommendation list and was ultimately TriStar's choice. The company initially opted for a 16-user software license, but is already well on its way to expanding the system to 50 users.



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The Solution

While TriStar began to see immediate returns from the new SYSPRO software, it did not solve the company's problem with its cut-shape operation. So, Cedrone approached SYSPRO to develop a solution. The resulting SYSPRO Material Yield System now enables TriStar to maximize productivity, minimize waste and return remnants to stock.

The Results

With its new exclusive arrangement with Saint Gobain, the future looks even brighter for TriStar, which is proving to be a leader in supplying engineered plastic solutions to industry. TriStar sales have grown substantially in 2004, surpassing those of 2003 by more than 30%. While Cedrone attributes a great deal of this growth to a

recovering economy and greater marketing efforts, he also recognizes that the increase is due to more efficient management. "Thanks to our SYSPRO software, we've been able to control our expenses and employee count because of greater productivity per employee".

Because of the new accord with Saint Gobain, Cedrone sees TriStar's revenues climbing substantially and the profit picture becoming even brighter thanks to SYSPRO. "Our return on investment on SYSPRO software is phenomenal," he says. "We're handling 30% more business with the same number of people. And, there's every reason to believe that we can handle new business with the same high levels of efficiency, thanks to the integrated and scalable nature of our SYSPRO solution."