APPLYING TECHNOLOGY

Management software makes two-shop juggling act easy

Multifaceted software provides quick quotes and job cost control

Like any shop, Johnson Tool Inc, Erie, PA, is faced with the task of managing time and resources to provide maximum profitability. But in 1995, this common task was transformed into a juggling act when Owner Harvey Downey acquired his second facility in this now two-site operation.

Johnson Tool, a precision machining and machine building company, needs to provide timely quotes to customers for a wide spectrum of jobs ranging from single part prototyping, to repeat orders, to building specialized machines.

With the addition of the second site, efficient administration and logistics would have become nearly impossible without some help. Realizing that he would need quick access to information to control costs and to be competitive, Downey turned to Job Shop Manager Plus software from Starn Technical Services, Meadville, PA.

In-depth research

In 1989, Starn designed a software program, Job Shop Manager Plus, for its in-house systems and processes. The software was developed after researching the processes that occurred in Starn's first 50 years of business.

The software features include part history, parts quoting, shop management, job cost control, employee evaluation, and finished parts inventory.

"Starn Job Manager Plus was developed by the people that use it every day, not just

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programmers that are trying to learn the industry and the day to day activities of its users," says James Dinger, Starn's director of marketing.

Multipurpose use

"The primary concern from my standpoint was to keep track of actual jobs and how much time was charged to them, as well as keeping track of quotes," says Dan Lemmon, shop manager. "We see a lot of repeat things, and if you don't have a good history, you end up quoting against yourself, which is foolish.

The research factor for me is probably the biggest single time saver. It takes a lot of time if you are leafing through file cabinets. Just in checking on re-work items, there's about a 75% reduction in time involved [with Starn Job Shop Manager Plus], maybe even more than that."

Not only is the program used to generate quotes, but it allows the company to look at areas that may not be profitable. "There are some jobs that fall through the cracks time and again, and you lose money on them every time," adds Lemmon. "We've practically eliminated all of those type of jobs."

"The cost accounting we're able to do with Starn Job Shop Manager Plus is vital, individually at the quoting table and overall when I'm reviewing the month," says Downey. "Before, on every job, I would have to go down line item by line and calculate out the margin. It's nice to have a program that does that for me."

For more information about **Starn Technical Services**, Meadville, PA. *e-mail:* **mailto:jdinger@starn.com** **Circle 390**

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