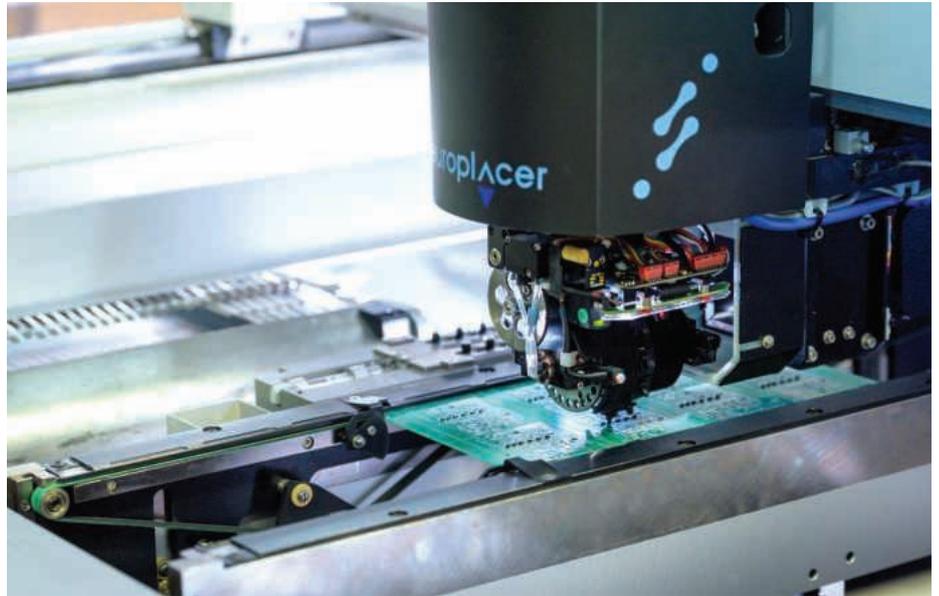


Reaping the benefits of a 123insight system

CT Production Ltd, based in Poole, Dorset, provides electronic manufacturing services. Originally founded in 1982, current MD Mario Morilla took over the company in 2015 after the previous owner retired. The company relied on an MRP package that had limited capabilities, as he explains: "Although we had reasonable control of our stock there was no serial number tracking capability and we couldn't take data out of the system and manipulate it. Complex structures were also an issue, such as creating sub-assemblies within a structure that could then be scheduled to be manufactured themselves. We were also looking to enter the aerospace and military markets, so CRM was an important factor to assist with managing ISO9001, SC21 and AS9100 accreditations."

The company decided to research the market and looked at several systems that offered a combined MRP/CRM solution, costing between £50 k-£100 k. The short term aim was to improve traceability of products and communications, with the long term target of integrating third party data such as test results and spectrum analysis into the system so that QA documentation can be quickly compiled at the point of shipping.

Several staff attended two of 123 Insight's Evaluation Workshops in March and May of 2011. Mario Morilla says: "We came away incredibly positive. In fact, we liked the open approach so much we are hosting similarly styled events for our own prospects,



customers and suppliers. However, others, including the then MD, that attended the second workshop did not share that view. In the end it was a 3/2 vote for another system."

It had taken two years to reach a decision on a solution and they started implementing the other system in June 2013. However, after purchase it quickly became apparent that it would not meet their needs. Jason Raby, engineering manager explains: "It was cumbersome, long-winded and completely fixed in its way of doing things, everything was a further tweak. All the extra costs that came into play started to turn us off and the implementation team didn't seem to know what they were doing."

Four months after selection, the company decided to halt the implementation, managing to reclaim much of its spend and limiting its exposure to around £14k. Staff immediately attended 123insight's six days of no-obligation training on the understanding that if the system didn't work for them they could walk away with nothing to pay.

After the training was completed, the decision was made to immediately select 123insight and move ahead with a staged implementation. Mario Morilla says: "We decided to start off with sales orders, works orders, delivery notes and invoices. There were a couple of additional minor functions that we needed for purchasing, so we spoke to 123insight and agreed a timeframe for development."

CT Production used 123insight's Data Import Toolkit to transfer the data from its old system. During the implementation process, Jason Raby created a dummy system while the additional functionality was being written. This allowed him to get accustomed to the software. After going live, the company immediately saw several benefits. There was a drastic reduction in the use of paper, as documents such as invoices were now emailed as PDFs or viewed on screen when needed. Jason Raby adds: "Paper used to go missing all the time, but that just doesn't happen anymore." A 'tracker' document used to follow jobs around production, but the information that this provided is now viewed on screen.

CT Production selected 123insight based



on the combination of its MRP capabilities and the integrated CRM+ option. Together they provide traceability not only for manufactured products but also for processes and communications within the business. This has allowed staff instant visibility to information thus spending less time chasing data around the facility. Email alerts can also be done to send reminders if an action has not been performed within a predetermined time period.

123insight's Advanced Serial Tracking provided a complete breakdown of a finished product with a couple of mouse clicks, quickly identifying the included components, who supplied them and in which batch, along with full details of the product's route through the manufacturing process. Sage 50 is also in use within the company's accounts department, so they implemented the AAI (Advanced Accounts Interface) to connect 123insight to it.

Another significant benefit is the ability to view and manipulate live data. Jason Raby says: "With 123insight we have the ability to create live data feeds into Excel. We can then run custom macros or pivot tables to look at it whichever way we want to. As a result our end of month Work in Progress

report that used to take around 6 hours now takes staff about 25 seconds to produce. It was custom reporting on steroids. As the system is so intuitive we were able to set all of this up without any assistance from 123insight's HelpDesk."

123insight has become the backbone of the company, so much so that it is now a part of CT Production's staff recruitment process. Candidates are given a short tutorial on how to use basic functionality on 123insight using a test system with dummy data and then asked to repeat a similar task. Those that are able to complete it move onto the next stage of recruitment.

Over recent years, the company has seen year on year growth of over 20 percent, and has ambitious expansion plans for the future. Mario Morilla concludes: "We're continuing to expand into aerospace and defence and will rely further on CRM+ for that. We're also planning to add more 123insight seats into other areas such as testing to further enhance and extend the traceability. Although we initially selected



the wrong system it was a no-brainer to re-select 123insight. The investment we made was paid back pretty quickly and it leads to ongoing savings. We're always getting more out of the system which is constant payback. In fact, we've won customers because of some of the functions that 123insight has, such as traceability and the linking of test information to orders."

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Tech Data appointed as leading distributor for Polaroid 3D printer

Tech Data has been appointed as the leading distributor for the new Polaroid ModelSmart 250S 3D printer and consumables range in the UK. It will be working with retailers and resellers to maximise the product's potential in the consumer, education and commercial markets.

One of the most famous names in imaging, Polaroid is making 3D printing available, affordable and desirable for everyone with this ground-breaking product. It has been designed specifically for the consumer market, with clean looks and designs that will fit in with the décor in any household, classroom or office.

The Polaroid ModelSmart 250S 3D printer comes with the unique Polaroid Prep software, which means you don't have to be a 3D expert to print good-looking 3D models. It makes printing 3D objects almost as easy as printing traditional text documents, opening up the world of 3D printing to the consumer for the first time. Users can import their own creations or any model from the many web sites with free 3D

objects, scale and easily print, with full visibility of estimated time and filament usage.

It is being brought to market through a three-year partnership between Polaroid and UK-based manufacturer, Environmental Business Products (EBP), which is Europe's largest and longest established collector and re-manufacturer of inkjet cartridges. During this time, EBP will be the sole manufacturer of the Polaroid 3D printer and consumables range. Polaroid 3D printers are manufactured exclusively in the UK.

Peter Lunn, senior category manager for Print at Tech Data, says: "Polaroid is an iconic brand-name and as well as being easy to setup and use, the new Polaroid ModelSmart 250S is what the market has been waiting for. It will be perfect for schools looking to acquire a usable and affordable 3D device and the growing number of home imaging enthusiasts. This is a fast-growing sector with huge potential."

The Polaroid ModelSmart 250S has a



large print area of 250(w) x 150(h) x 150(d) mm and features accurate auto-calibration and a vertical resolution (layer height) that can be set to between 50 and 350 microns. It also has a WIFI-enabled camera built-in to enable remote monitoring of prints and is very easy to setup and use, including only 12 advanced settings.

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