

Platinum goes live in a week, sees PO raising time drop from hours to minutes

Platinum Precision Engineering, based in County Down, Northern Ireland manufactures precision machined components for sectors such as aerospace and automotive. The company was founded in 2014 and, after using spreadsheets and paper for two years, decided it needed a more comprehensive system.

Managing director, Ross Fleming, noted that the time to process orders was growing faster than the orders themselves: "As the business started to grow, purchase orders were getting bigger, going from one or two lines to maybe twenty. We're a manufacturing company, so we are constantly timing machines and people. The process of getting everything on a spreadsheet, getting prices, copying/pasting between spreadsheets, printing a PDF and then checking it, with a 20-line purchase order could easily have taken two hours to make sure that everything is perfect. That's even before you have to start printing out works orders and plan production."

They reviewed the market and initially discovered 123insight at an ADS SC21 aerospace event. Ultimately, at that time, the company decided to write its own system. Ross Fleming says: "At that stage I believed that what we do is quite simplistic, so I employed a local software engineer to develop an MRP system. It took about a year to realise that we had no chance of achieving this, it's more complex than it looks on paper."

Ross Fleming then made the decision to



contact Drew McCoubrey, MD and founder of QMS Insight, the local dealer for 123insight, attending an evaluation workshop in the summer of 2017. This provides a complete overview of the system in 2 1/2 hours, answering any technical questions. He was also already aware that two of his customers used 123insight, one of which is a major supplier to the aerospace industry.

Ross Fleming continues: "I thought that if it's good enough for a company that's buying and manufacturing a large number of components and assemblies, then it's good enough for us."

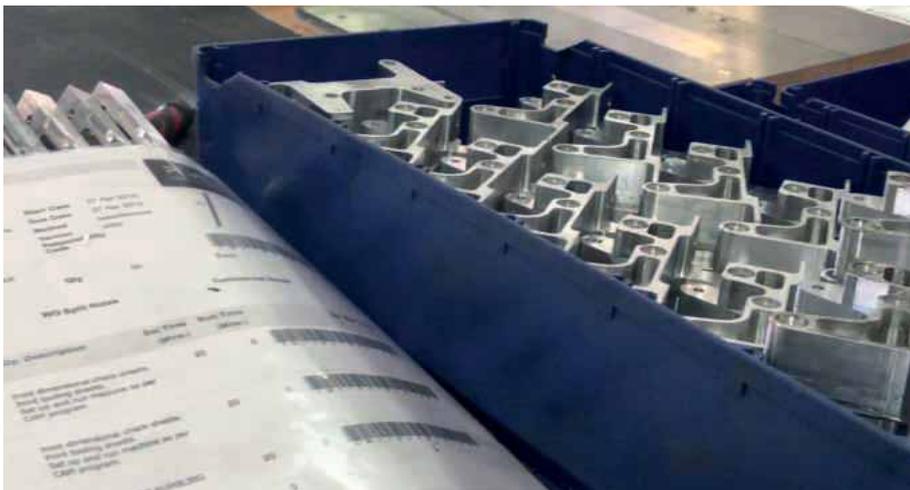
Platinum Precision registered to receive a 123insight licence on 9th August 2017, with training scheduled for early September, provided by QMS Insight. Ross Fleming was able to get to grips with the system quickly.

The company also took advantage of 123insight's remote installation, at just £295, whereby 123 Insight staff connected to Platinum's server remotely, installed the 123insight system and connected and configured it to Platinum's SQL Server database.

Implementation took just a week, with Ross Fleming noting that it was far from the challenging experience that he was anticipating: "It was like a new toy that I wanted to get up and running. It was actually good fun processing our first purchase order, seeing everything at the click of a button, creating purchase orders for material, and printing works orders."

Instantly, the day-to-day pressures were drastically reduced. Processes that previously proved extremely time-consuming were now reduced to a few mouse-clicks, with Ross Fleming remembering the hours he previously had to spend on raising purchase orders: "We went from that long process to realising that once you get your parts set up, your structures right, your billet prices and subcontracting set up, you can take that process down to literally minutes."

As a company that holds ISO9001 accreditation and is moving towards AS9100, Platinum needed a system that would provide it with the end-to-end traceability required for both materials and treatments. Ross Fleming adds: "123insight ties everything all together. I don't have to go looking for anything as it's all stored in



the system. We can also drag and drop attachments, which is a foolproof feature for the ISO9001 and AS9100 accreditations.”

Platinum also rolled Shop Floor Data Collection (SFDC) onto the shop floor, which not only provided him with accurate data about job runtimes, but also allowed other staff to quickly answer customer queries.

Ross Fleming says: “We now have a professional look on all our documents, whether it's orders going to suppliers or sales acknowledgements to customers. Being able to put your own logo on reports gives that professional approach.”

One of Platinum Precision's largest customers is also a 123insight user. The two companies use this to their benefit by employing electronic data exchange (EDI) to ensure that orders and work in progress match seamlessly, with a 100 percent success rate to date.

Ross Fleming adds: “We get an open order report sent through to us on a twice-weekly basis. We can then export that same information from 123 in terms of our sales orders, and then through Excel we can match each record off to make sure that what our customer thinks we are making is the same as what we think we're making and

that no orders have been missed. It hasn't found an error yet, as our own internal processing is good.”

He noted that despite considerable growth forecast in 2018, they have not had to expand on administration resources overall. A part-time administrator has been hired, with Ross Fleming now able to spend much more time on the shop floor instead: “Our turnover should double this year over last, and the resource needed to push those orders through has stayed around the same.”

Local support has been excellent, with Ross Fleming noting that the 123insight help desk has also been useful: “Here in Northern Ireland we've got the personal touch with Drew, who will always answer our call or get back to us. However, the 123insight help desk is great as well for answering any issues if I can't get in contact with Drew.”

In comparison to the alternative systems that Ross Fleming looked at, he prefers 123insight's business model, with 123insight's monthly subscription costing little more than the maintenance of other systems alone: “I think it offers great value for money; you know where you are, it's a

fixed fee and you can cater for it. It doesn't take many hours of my time on the shop floor to pay the monthly subscription. It's well priced in the market.”

Platinum Precision is in the process of significantly extending its factory space, with new CNC equipment being added once complete. Ross Fleming is confident that he can continue to grow the business without worrying about the administration infrastructure.

Ross Fleming concludes: “After going live we haven't looked back. It runs and does the job and doesn't need much support or input. 123insight is a fantastic system.”

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