

Tridelta Industries improves business processes with IFS Applications™

Investing in IFS Applications™ equipped Tridelta Industries, US, with the strengths of an integrated business solution: better management control, better development tools, a state-of-the-art interface, and the capacity to deal with the increasingly larger order flows the company was enjoying. Based almost entirely on standard software, component-based IFS Applications offered Tridelta independence from the homegrown solutions of individual programmers and ensured the unlimited scalability that is crucial to an expanding enterprise. Also, the step-by-step implementation meant minimal disruption of operations.



Tridelta Industries, founded in 1976 in Mentor, Ohio, is a rapidly growing, privately held company. Tridelta's Pressure Products Division (PPD) designs and manufactures devices that provide precise control options and are used wherever airflow is critical in the control of an appliance or piece of equipment. The Electronic Products Division (EPD) applies expertise in time and temperature related controls to the food service industry, as a designer and supplier of sophisticated electronic controls. EPD has a new, state-of-the-art manufacturing facility that employs both surface mount (SMT) and through-hole technology, providing EPD engineers with design flexibility. A third division, Mavrik Motors, designs and manufactures switched reluctance motors for applications involving variable speed, fault tolerance and cool running.

The Problem

Tridelta strives for as much synergy among its divisions as possible. One problem creating that synergy was that the divisions used a variety of software systems. Jim Walsh, Data Processing Supervisor, explains: "We had grown our own robust manufacturing system,

but we were finding requests for new and additional applications were coming in at a faster pace than we could meet them using internal resources. We also realized that we needed a better user interface and better development tools. My goal was to try to standardize systems to make sure we weren't quite so reliant on individual contributors and to get away from the "personalization" of the tools. That way, if a programmer decided to go on to greener pastures, we wouldn't be high and dry."

The Solution

The solution selection process, according to Walsh, was almost comical. "We found 10 likely candidates and had each of them come in to give us their best shot. From that, we selected three finalists. Then, late in the game, I saw an ad from IFS. In one session, they turned the whole group around to be for them and against the other players. That says a lot for their sales staff-and for the package."

Why did Tridelta buy IFS? Walsh says: "We wanted a standardized solution so we wouldn't be reliant on individuals in a time when people are shuffling jobs every couple of years. We also needed

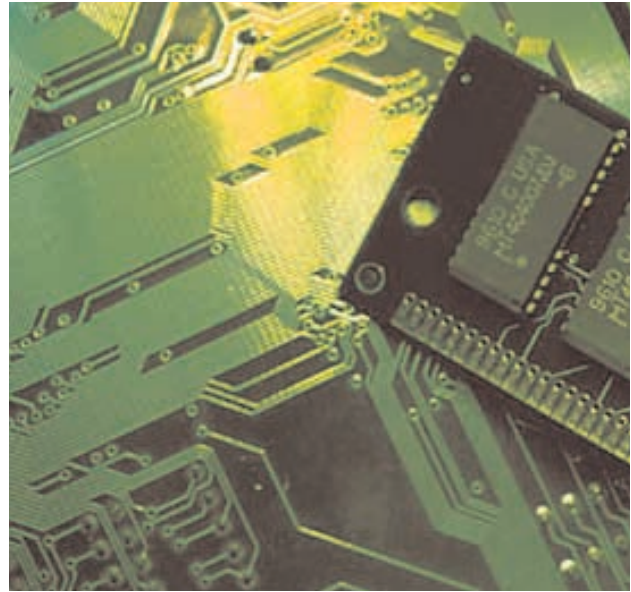
intensive revision control that we didn't have before. And we needed better control on our inventory, with faster turnaround on our MRP runs. We wanted to go with a standardized tool set underneath the package, as well. The Oracle database that IFS uses was a good selling point. We wanted greater integration, between accounting and the rest of the company, so we could have more granularity in queries and reports."

Implementation

Tridelta decided to phase IFS in over a relatively short period, starting in July, 1999. The goal was to implement Phase 1 items by mid-October; they ended up going live in mid-December, which is good for such an aggressive schedule. The Tridelta dedicated team consisted of a steering committee of twelve people and a core team of eight.

Phase 1 included the implementation of accounting, including invoicing and payables; customer orders; engineering; purchasing; inventory; master scheduling; material requirements planning; and manufacturing. Phase 2 consists of constraint based scheduling, shop floor reporting, equipment monitoring, equipment performance, customer scheduling, supplier scheduling, project delivery, and project reporting. Shop floor reporting is partially in place already.

The whole company is now on IFS. The only difference between the divisions is to what degree it is being used. Walsh looks forward to the next stage: "When we implement the next generation, IFS 2001, we expect greater control over our engineering process—the drawings, procedures, route sheets, bills of material—and greater shop floor control through use of bar coding both on incoming inventory and outgoing shipments, flow through the floor, and warehouse management."



Benefits

First, Tridelta can now boast more accurate business management because of improved access to costs, inventory, and other key data. A chief accomplishment from implementing IFS has been the training by the core team of virtually the entire user community. Tridelta now has documented business process flows. This is a major, unexpected bonus they got from the implementation IFS gave them. Now there are references for new and existing employees to find the right way to do anything. The resulting cohesion is a side benefit of the implementation. They have reduced inventory pick time and now can pick closer to when they build products.

Software

IFS Financials™; IFS Manufacturing™;
IFS Distribution™; IFS Engineering™