

Stamping Company Improves Productivity and Traceability, Reduces Costs by 15 Percent



At a Glance:

- A stamping company implements ERP from the Plex Manufacturing Cloud in under six months with no disruptions to production or customer deliveries.
- The stamper replaces a dozen systems with one integrated solution, providing real-time information.
- The company no longer needs internal systems maintenance, redeploying 50 percent of IT staff to more strategic activities.
- Integrated traceability enables users to accomplish in a few mouse clicks what once involved 30 minutes of work.
- Plex Cloud ERP reduces energy consumption and monthly IT maintenance costs by 15 percent.

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About Jagemann Stamping Company

Meeting challenges is nothing new to Jagemann Stamping Company (JSC), a full-service Wisconsin-based metal fabricator. Like many other suppliers to the automotive industry, JSC has worked hard to remain competitive through technology innovation and continuous improvement.

The implementation of the industry-leading Plex Cloud ERP system is a case in point.

An Integrated Approach

By replacing its collection of “patched-together” information systems with Plex, JSC achieved a number of business goals. Plex, a fully integrated Software as a Service (SaaS) ERP solution, enabled the company to reduce its ongoing IT maintenance costs, increase the accessibility of production and business data, improve product quality, increase productivity and inventory visibility, and realign resources to better support its strategic goals.

“Mission-critical data is always accessible, safe, and secure.”

Speedy and efficient implementation practices enabled JSC to implement Plex in less than six months with no disruptions to production, customer deliveries, or manufacturing orders. Today Jagemann Stamping is reaping the benefits of a fully integrated, completely accessible system with built-in disaster recovery and real-time information.

No Silos of Information

Prior to launching Plex Cloud ERP in early 2008, JSC had been using dissimilar systems on different platforms; spending significant time applying various patches, updates and upgrades; and manually creating “snapshot” programs and reports.

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The systems lacked necessary functions, were inaccessible to a number of employees, utilized hard-to-read “green-screen” character-based displays, and were inflexible to changes. Information resided in functional silos, which rarely deposited the information in shared locations.

When adjustments had to be made to these systems, JSC hired professional developers, and the developers often disrupted production while they installed their “fixes.”

Plex Cloud ERP replaced nearly a dozen systems with one fully integrated system, and its launch occurred without any disruptions to JSC’s production.



On the Road to Improvement

Prior to implementing Plex Cloud ERP, JSC appointed Patti Nowak as the implementation project manager. She brought together a cross-functional group of employees at all levels — from press technicians through corporate management — as the implementation team. The entire implementation was completed in less than six months.

Efficiency and Cost Savings

Because its functions are completely integrated, Plex Cloud ERP automatically provides JSC users more meaningful, timely, high-quality information than had been provided by their previous “silo” systems. This comprehensive view of issues has enabled the company to better manage its quality, while saving time, eliminating duplication of effort, and reducing manual processes.

For example, JSC purchases rolled metal in master coils, has them slitted and stamps them into finished parts. A number of its customers require the company to trace a finished product back to the master coil from which it came so that it can produce the quality certifications from that master coil.

In the past, employees were required to navigate through information in three different systems to get these certifications, which caused significant delays.

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Plex pulls together traceability data from throughout the entire system so what previously involved three systems and at least 30 minutes of work can now be accomplished with just a few mouse clicks. Finding all jobs with the same originating master coil would have taken hours of work using JSC's old software. Again, with Plex, the complete traceability tree is only a few mouse clicks away.

Work Instructions

Plex Cloud ERP handles job- or part-specific instructions, which are attached directly to the part. It also allows cross-shift communication using electronic bulletin boards on a work center or part level. These functions allow JSC's Quality and Engineering departments to set standards on a part level and immediately communicate them to the manufacturing floor simply by attaching them to the part information or scheduled job. Also, the press technicians can leave bulletins for one another about press performance or part issues, so there is always a clear trail of communication.

"Plex's flexibility is one of its greatest benefits."

In the past, this communication flow was managed through the "sneaker network": someone wrote out the documentation, printed it, put on their running shoes, and ran copies around the building.

Because Plex is maintained at off-premise data centers, JSC needs to supply only basic Internet connections and inexpensive PCs for its system users.

As a result, the company is now saving nearly 15 percent in its IT maintenance costs and reduced energy consumption. The industry-leading security and disaster recovery methods utilized by Plex bring JSC managers like Nowak great "peace of mind," knowing their mission-critical data is always accessible, safe, and secure.

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Better Use of Internal Resources

Because the company no longer needs to oversee system maintenance internally, it has been able to redeploy over half of its IT staff to value-added activities. These include continuous improvement projects that have identified more than \$200,000 of savings for the company.

Prior to implementing Plex, the company's ratio of user devices (computers and printers) to IT staff was 40 to one. After implementation, that ratio rose to nearly 100 to one. This means a smaller staff is now managing and supporting more than twice as many devices as before — an efficiency improvement that has greatly pleased the JSC management team.

“We've identified continuous improvement projects resulting in more than \$200,000 of savings.”

Ease of Use

Not only has Plex Cloud ERP brought savings and efficiencies, it is so easy to use that employees who avoided using the company's previous systems out of a fear of technology are now happily engaged in accessing, gathering, and compiling data, contributing more fully to the company's continued success.

“Our entire staff has adapted very quickly to the Plex user interface,” said Nowak. “It is intuitive and easy to use. Even employees who had never used a computer are comfortable navigating the Control Panel to record production.”

The system's flexibility, both in its entirety and within individual functions, is what Nowak finds to be one of its greatest benefits.

She explained, “We continue to expand our use of Plex at JSC, delving into new functions regularly as we improve our operations and business processes.”

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About Plex

Plex is the Manufacturing Cloud, delivering industry-leading ERP and manufacturing automation to hundreds of companies across industries including aerospace and defense, food and beverage and motor vehicles. Plex pioneered cloud solutions for the plant floor, connecting suppliers, machines, people, systems and customers with capabilities that are easy to configure, deliver continuous innovation, and reduce IT costs. With insight that starts on the production line, Plex helps companies see and understand every aspect of their business ecosystem, enabling them to lead in an ever-changing market.