

GLOBAL SHOP SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY

Bristol Machine Company

A privately-held contract, fabrication and machining firm, [Bristol Machine Company](#) manufactures OEM parts for mining and heavy equipment manufacturers around the world. These include hydraulic cylinders, brake assemblies, machined weldments, gearbox housings, machined castings, smelter furnace cooling blocks and more.



New truck box for underground mine truck



New bucket for underground scoop tram loader featuring high wear cast lip, wear abrasion-resistant plate construction

Headquartered in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, Bristol Machine offers complete manufacturing solutions, including custom machining, welding, heat treatment, chroming, gear cutting, technical support and global exports. They perform a variety of contract work for the local mining industry and offer engineering services for global smelter manufacturing firms. The firm is registered with the Quality Management Institute to ISO 9001-2000, and the Canadian Welding Bureau to W47.1 Division 2.1.

Bristol Machine [implemented](#) Global Shop Solutions ERP software to comply with a large OEM client that required all its suppliers to have an ERP or MRP system in place. But their old business management system also had numerous drawbacks that suggested a more up-to-date system would yield a significant return on investment.

“Our previous system had no scheduling capabilities,” recalls Alain Theriault, Engineering Manager for Bristol Machine. “The manufacturing piece couldn’t talk to the financial piece. And we had to enter everything twice, release everything twice, and hope that we got pricing between the two correct. Our customers realized we needed an ERP system, and so did we.”

After researching different ERP packages, Theriault settled on Global Shop Solutions due to its intuitive interface, stable ownership, and integrated manufacturing, [financial](#) and [scheduling](#) modules. More important, only Global Shop Solutions ERP software offered the ability to handle OEM, serial manufacturing, [make-to-stock](#) and one-off [job shop](#) projects all in one system.

Better BOMs, Better Costing

Bristol Machine’s old system lacked the ability to handle [BOMs](#). As a result, all BOMs had to be built manually – a slow and often painful process. With Global Shop Solutions ERP software, Bristol Machine can now build large, multi-level BOMs with ease. More important, the BOMs make all the data visible and linked, making it easy to check the status of all subcomponents on a project, roll up their costs, and determine the true cost of the project.

“Creating BOMs in Global Shop Solutions lets us track all the different work orders so they complete together to finish the entire assembly,” says Theriault. “That way, we no longer have \$50,000 projects waiting on a \$10 part for completion. And Global Shop Solutions links all the costs together for one final assembly, so we know as soon as a project is done how much it costs.”

“The system also gives us very accurate historical costs. This helps us know where we can go with quotes to get new business, and allows us to adjust to changing market conditions more quickly because we know our true costs compared to sales on a regular basis.”

Powerful Customization Capabilities

Like many Global Shop Solutions customers, Bristol Machine has used the powerful [Global Application Builder](#) (GAB) to create several enhancements that save time and simplify operations on the shop floor. One of these supports the company’s extensive use of sophisticated CNC machines.

Bristol Machine’s old system contained a large database with all the setup sheets and manufacturers’ instructions for manufacturing parts. Unfortunately, this database was not compatible with Global Shop Solutions ERP software. Using the custom GAB application, workers can now access the database directly from the [Shop Floor Data Collection](#) stations on the shop floor.

“Instead of having two separate, stand-alone databases to manage all the manufacturers instructions, we have one that seamlessly integrates with Global Shop Solutions,” explains Theriault. “We don’t have to recreate our database. We don’t have to bother with duplicate data entry. And our people have instant access to the documents they need right on the shop floor. The time savings are enormous!”

Bristol Machine also makes good use of Global Shop Solutions’ ability to create custom reports in Crystal Reports. And they’ve even done some customization within Global Shop Solutions’ [sales analysis](#) module to improve their financial acumen.

“One of the real strengths of Global Shop Solutions is that it makes our financial status easily visible at any time,” adds Theriault. “We operate three separate plants, and we’ve made a few customizations to sales analysis that allow us to individually see the financial health of each plant.”

People, Service Make the Difference

Theriault believes that the true measure of an ERP software goes beyond its technical capabilities to include the quality and competency of people that develop, implement and support it.

“The strength of your workforce in large part determines the quality of your product,” he explains, “and very few ERP firms can match the quality of people at Global Shop Solutions. At most ERP companies, the consultants are software people who have some knowledge of manufacturing and try to make your company fit their software. Global Shop Solutions [consultants](#) are manufacturing people who understand your business and try to make their software fit you.”

“Global Shop Solutions is a great product backed by great people. Whether you do OEM serial production parts or project-based parts; whether you’re trying to integrate finance and manufacturing; or whether you need to add in a powerful scheduling functionality, Global Shop Solutions addresses every business need you could have.”



Scooptram frame weldment ready to mount.