Jensen Metal Products Inc.

Jensen Metal Products Inc. is a one-stop job shop specializing in contract manufacturing of custom parts and components. Headquartered in Racine, Wisconsin, the company makes everything from complex bracketry and weldments to fabricated assemblies, gaskets, panels, shims, stainless steel glamor parts and more. Currently focusing on the agriculture, oil and gas and lighting industries, Jensen Metal serves a diverse clientele from small, privately owned OEM businesses to Fortune 500 companies.

Jensen Metal welders are AWS D1.1-2008 certified, ensuring a quality product every time

Jensen Metal moves a lot of product through its 45,000-square-foot facility.

With an array of state-of-the art equipment and technology, Jensen Metal works with a wide variety of metals, including stainless and high carbon steel, aluminum, copper, brass and titanium. The company also offers in-house powder coating, argon-backshielded tig-welding, plating and anodizing, and specialized packaging. JMP is ISO9001:2008 registered.

Like many manufacturers, Jensen Metal outgrew its first ERP software. Slow and difficult to navigate, the system suffered from poor data integration and lacked sufficient job costing and scheduling capabilities – two critical areas for custom job shops. Seeking a more robust ERP system that could grow with the company, management turned to Global Shop Solutions ERP software.

"There's a lot to like about Global Shop Solutions," says Jeff Lowman, Jensen Metal's Engineering and Quality Assurance Manager. "We especially liked the ease of navigation throughout the system and the full traceability of jobs. The Dashboard and scheduling modules were also very impressive."

Flexible Scheduling with APS

A large percentage of Jensen Metal's jobs require short lead times and quick turnaround delivery dates, with most of their backlog being frontloaded into a narrow three- to four-week window. Throw in customer changes and new jobs getting added every day, and it quickly becomes difficult to determine which jobs to start by when.

According to Lowman, Global Shop Solutions ERP software simplifies the scheduling process.

"Using the Shop Floor Data Collection screens and the Advanced Planning & Scheduling (APS) module, we can track up-to-the-minute data on every job on the shop floor," he explains. "This allows us to make more accurate scheduling decisions to finish jobs on time and keep our customers happy.

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"When we get rush jobs, APS allows us to drop them right into the schedule and see how it impacts the workload on every workcenter and every department," continues Lowman. "That way, we can see what adjustments we need to make to get the work done on time."

22% Improvement In On-Time Delivery
Tracking workflow through Global Shop Solutions ERP software has also allowed Jensen Metal to improve on-time delivery by 22%. Previously, Jensen Metal lacked the ability to accurately track the production metrics that contribute most to on-time deliveries. The ability to track every step of the production process has led to a significant turnaround.

"Global Shop Solutions gives us a complete and truthful picture of what's happening on the shop floor," says Lowman. "Between APS and the Dashboard we use to track on-time delivery, we can see the status of all open jobs and react to any problems in real time."

Meanwhile, the access to data through the Shop Floor Data Collection terminals helps improve the accuracy of job costing by making it easier to track labor hours.

"With our old system, machinists would clock in and out of jobs, but it always took a long time to capture and organize labor hours data, especially by individual jobs," recalls Lowman. "Now we can instantly see who was on a job, how long, and how many parts they ran. With a few clicks of the mouse, we can dig down deeper to see if it made sense for the operation to take that long. If not, we can talk with the operator to see if they ran into something we didn't know about and take corrective action."

Founded in 1922 and currently under fourth generation ownership, Jensen Metal, and its sister company Real Flame Fireplaces, resides in Racine, WI

Customizing with GAB
To further improve the formatting and analysis of production data, Jensen Metal uses the Global Application Builder (GAB) to create custom scripts and programs. They also customize by downloading existing GAB programs created by other Global Shop Solutions users.

A recent download saves time by enhancing the standard open order report to allow workers to bring up the sales order without having to change screens or navigate to another part of the system. Another custom program provides a popup message feature that can be used in shop floor control, work orders, sales orders, routing, and more.

Jensen Metal often ends up with excess parts from a job run, but they can't inventory the parts because they aren't finished components. Operators use the messaging popup to enter notes into the system indicating the type and quantity of the parts. Whenever customer service creates new orders, the notes automatically pop up to provide the information.

"We talked about this for long time but never had time to do it on our own," says Lowman. "I put in a service call to Global Shop Solutions and they installed it for us and got it up and running very quickly. Our service reps love it, and it gives us a better idea of what we actually have in inventory."

Improving Quality and Quoting
Using the Quality Control application helps to manage engineering change notices (ECNs) more efficiently. In the past, when someone needed to make a small change to a part, ECNs were logged with handwritten notes or word of mouth.

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Now Global Shop Solutions ERP software electronically tracks them all in one application, helping to manage immediate changes as well as those might not occur for months.

"Most error fixes need to be to be taken care of right away, but Global Shop Solutions also gives us better visibility on items we may not run for another year but need to look at the next time we do it," says Lowman. "We don't have to rely on memory because the ECN is saved in the system."

The ability to track historical data also helps with the quoting process. Often, customers will send a new part number that differs only slightly from an existing one. Workers can easily pull up any part number to see the costs, efficiencies and profit margins on any parts made in the past, resulting in more accurate quotes for new parts.

"Having the historical data also allows us to accurately update previous quotes on the same job," adds Lowman. "Did we misquote it the first time? Do we need to change our process a little bit? Do we need to charge more or can we make adjustments and keep the price where it is? All this information helps to figure out how to quote the job moving forward."

Saving Time by Exporting Data

Another huge time saver for Jensen Metal is the ability to create custom reports by running database queries in Global Shop Solutions ERP software and exporting the data into Excel spreadsheets.

For example, Jensen Metal's biggest customer has two separate divisions, but both use the same customer number for tracking and billing purposes. Separating the data to determine sales and margins for each division used to take hours. Now Lowman exports the data into an Excel spreadsheet and easily builds charts and graphs showing sales, costs, profitability and more for each division.

He uses the same process to create an open order report for daily production meetings. The report provides a succinct overview of all jobs currently on the shop floor, including how many open operations remain and when APS says they will be finished.

"The report gives us a high-level view of everything we want to look at in the shop for the day," says Lowman. "In particular, it tells us which jobs are currently late and which jobs will be if we don't start moving resources around. The ability to pull all this information into one summary report is priceless.

"The visibility of data in Global Shop Solutions is superb," concludes Lowman. "We can quickly find the information we need, we know it will be accurate and up to date, and we can format it the way we want to see it. We have all the data we need to make good decisions for our business and our customers."

Delivering a quality product on time and at the right price will put a smile on everyone's face.

Jensen Metal offers a wide variety of products from small bracketry to large complex weldments.

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