Challenges

Managing dispersed supplier networks today is increasingly difficult and costly. Delays in delivery, lost productivity and greater supply chain costs hamper even the most efficient operations. These problems are amplified by increased manufacturing complexity, longer material lead times and demand for a faster turnaround.

These challenges are often related to the following problems.

**Limited supplier network visibility**

Because companies commonly rely on tier one or tier two suppliers for status information from lower-tiered suppliers vital information is often late or inaccurate.

**Managing to estimated completion date**

When downstream suppliers fail to provide advance notice of slippage, and the manufacturing supply chain is managing to estimated completion dates, the result will impact production.

**Lack of common manufacturing execution systems (MES)**

The disparity of MES systems among small to mid-sized enterprises is significant and restricts the flow of vital information.

The Solution

Managing manufacturing supply chains requires greater visibility into manufacturing processes, not just inventory and logistics. Tracking products as they are manufactured or assembled gives more time to react to changes or disruptions in the chain. To improve agility, information about process status must come from all tiers in the chain, whether the supplier is an international conglomerate or a small rural machine shop.

**JobSight VisAbility** software is a web-based solution that enables better information flow by providing the status of ordered materials, purchase orders, and related parts at each stage of the manufacturing process through shipment.

**JobSight VisAbility** offers a clear view into the extended supplier network and provides an advance warning of delivery issues before the products are due on the shipping docks.

**JobSight VisAbility** uses a simple web interface to provide information updates from all supply chain participants, regardless of the systems and tools they are using at each facility. Even spreadsheets and faxes can be integrated into the information-sharing system. This common platform ensures data consistency, ease of use, and accelerated adoption.

Proactively manage your suppliers: visibility into a supplier network’s manufacturing processes provides the best early warning of problems and the greatest production flexibility. Unfortunately, most supply chain software lets users see only shipping status—not manufacturing status. **JobSight VisAbility** shows the entire picture, with both shipping status and the status for each manufacturing process at each supplier.

Manage by Exception

The solution provides information in a clear, easy-to-understand dashboard to help users pinpoint problems and resolve issues quickly.

**Early Warning System: JobSight VisAbility** tracks raw materials on hand, start date and work in process for each supplier. The software also tracks “velocity,” the rate at which suppliers can produce a specific product and provide notice on slippage on future delivery dates. Clients have complete control to track all processes, critical path processes or any combination of the two.
Solution Benefits

Improved on-time delivery
Knowing about down-stream production slippage as it happens provides the opportunity to get delivery back on track before it’s too late.

Increased resource utilization
When deliveries just can’t be on time, JobSight VisAbility provides users with notice to adjust internal production schedules, keeping resources billable.

Reduced management costs
Automatic supplier notifications and direct supplier interface provides reliable, timely information to keep teams focused on priorities and reduce non-value-added tasks, such as tracking down overdue materials.

Improved manufacturing agility
Accurate data on the status of down-stream materials gives greater flexibility to adjust production schedules and better meet shifting demands.

Implementation
The Professional Services required to implement VisAbility are as follows:
- Phase 1 – Discovery
- Phase 2 – Design
- Phase 3 – Implementation and Training
- Phase 4 – Operations and Support

The software is accessed via Software as a Service Model (SaaS) and licensed on an active purchase order basis.

About the Electro-Optics Center
The Electro-Optics Center (EOC), a proud part of The Pennsylvania State University, is a hybrid between the best components of a university and those of private industry. This relationship allows us access to the university’s researchers and scientists, its state-of-the-art facilities and leading
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