

I Holland puts information at the heart of growth plans

Submitted by: Lighthouse Systems

Wednesday, 13 June 2012

Lighthouse Shopfloor-Online delivers tangible benefits through data availability, visibility and analysis

I Holland replaces SPC-Light with the enterprise-wide Shopfloor-Online from Lighthouse Systems to deliver greater control to operators and facilitating improved links between the order processing systems and those operating on the shop floor. Having information immediately available where it is needed, on the shop floor, has reduced lead times considerably. That, in turn, has increased capacity potential and has enabled I Holland to offer its customers “priority deliveries” as an enhanced service.

Gains in SPC prompted the search for similar improvements in capacity planning and analysis, downtime analysis and quality. This is possible due to the visibility and mapping of critical machines within the factory. Orders can be tracked, measurements analysed and reaction times improved. Getting data directly from and to the shop floor was a priority and linking enterprise systems to those in the factory gives a global view of company performance.

John Woloszczak, Senior Manufacturing Operations Manager for I Holland, comments, “The work we do is bespoke and about 80 per cent of our production is new product. This makes our requirements quite different to many other manufacturers. An average batch size for us is around 30 units and the specifications are customer specific, varying in many ways from one to another. We have to be sure that the tolerance levels for each customer specification are met and to do that the critical dimensions for each tool are downloaded to the work areas on the shop floor. The specifications are driven by sales order processing and delivered from the ERP through to the MES (Shopfloor-Online) with the necessary instructions. That way the operators have the specifics of each batch in a clear instruction set at their station on the factory floor.”

With just one production facility delivering product 24x7, I Holland is not in a position to add new production lines or increase the number of shifts per week. Instead, it has to find greater productivity through efficiency improvements.

One of the first areas to be addressed was waste. Historically, the main cause of waste was via extra throughput that was subsequently scrapped when the production run was complete. This extra throughput was running at between 10 and 15 per cent, so it presented an immediate and clear opportunity for savings.

Woloszczak comments, “The capacity loss through waste was significant and just by reducing it we would be able to increase plant production capacity overnight. With the automation of the order processing to shop floor systems we can ensure the set-up of the line much more accurately first time. So, now, we only put one spare through at the beginning of a production run. This is used for set-up and is then scrapped. And, waste is reduced to almost nothing.”

This new, automated approach to production requires no calculations on the part of the operators which cuts the chances of human error occurring. Also, the information is available as required on the local

workstations on the shop floor and operators input quality measurements directly into the system. This means that issues are flagged immediately and they can be dealt with more quickly and effectively as a result.

About I Holland (<http://www.iholland.co.uk>)

More than six decades of research, development and investment has established I Holland as the pre-eminent supplier of punches and dies to producers of tablets across the globe.

The company's commitment to the development of innovative materials and products, combined with state of the art Quality Assurance Technology and unmatched customer service, has seen its solutions being successfully adopted by customers in more than 80 countries worldwide. Its punches are manufactured using high precision CNC tool grinders and users of its tablet compression tooling and punches and dies have benefitted from enhanced product quality and increased productivity. Unwavering dedication to quality, innovation and the understanding of tableting science has established I Holland as a leading manufacturer and supplier of punches and dies of the highest quality.

About Lighthouse Systems (<http://www.lighthousesystems.com>)

Lighthouse Systems is one of the world's leading developers of factory information systems known as manufacturing execution systems. MES is configurable software that helps manufacturing companies achieve measurable improvements in efficiency, output, compliance, quality and customer satisfaction. Implementing MES also greatly assists in the drive for LEAN manufacturing.

The company's MES solution - the Shopfloor-Online MES Factory Information System - provides real-time visibility of the entire manufacturing environment. Being web based, the information it collects can be accessed by anyone who needs it - the operator of a particular machine, a colleague on another part of the line or the shift manager. It also makes it available to support functions: production engine maintenance, engineering, quality and, of course, operational management

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