

RPC Containers maximizes productivity with BarcoVision Manufacturing Execution System



Case study

RPC Containers Ltd, manufacturers of a wide range of moulded containers for the DIY and food industries, turned to BMS when they recently replaced the production monitoring system at their Blackburn site. The factory processes about 5 million components a week on a 24-hour operation, 7 days a week.

“With such a high volume of components, fine control over our cycle times is critical. It is essential to account for every second with up-to-date, highly visual production information so that we can tackle problem areas as they occur,” says John Tyson, Manufacturing Manager. “Our previous monitoring system was ten years old and needed replacing because the technology was becoming old and inflexible.

It wasn't a Windows® based system and did not give us the real-time information we needed. Despite employing somebody to interrogate the data, it only gave us a small percentage of the information that the BarcoVision PLANTMASTER Manufacturing Execution System (MES) provides automatically and in real-time.”

Productivity planning

"PLANTMASTER also gives us the facility to plan jobs and move them from one machine to another to maximize our productivity."

RPC went out to tender before selecting BarcoVision PLANTMASTER. "We evaluated all the production monitoring systems on the market before deciding that PLANTMASTER was the most advanced on offer". At RPC in Blackburn, PLANTMASTER is monitoring 43 injection moulding and 15 stretch blow injection moulding machines, together with a further 16 print and labelling machines. "Previously, we didn't have the facility for planning information on the shop floor but now the machine operators can see the number, quantity and tool description of the next five jobs, so that they can be better prepared ahead of the job change, which is highly beneficial," explains Mr Tyson. "PLANTMASTER gives us better control of our cycle times than before, which has allowed us to improve our efficiency from 98% to 99%."

"Our first installation went very smoothly, with equipment arriving on time, software installed according to the project plan, the links to our ERP system fully integrated. The final solution has more than met all our project requirements."

The solution they offered was very advanced and included using intelligent wireless devices to provide a high degree of flexibility for shop-floor layouts. Ever since the initial project meeting I have been impressed with the quality of the project management and the technical skills available.

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Cost-effective wireless technology

"As well as monitoring cycle efficiency, we also monitor scrap rates and run efficiency. The system is very flexible so that we can show the information on the BarcoVision Data Units and produce any system reports that we need. BarcoVision's wireless technology is less expensive to install and useful when machines need to be moved. The service team at BMS is always available to help us over the phone for general advice or they can dial into our system remotely for technical assistance."

John Taylor, Head of IT for RPC Group adds: "Following surveying the marketplace for a new shop-floor machine monitoring system, we chose to work with BMS."



Investment pay back

PCs on the shop floor and in the supervisor's office run the PLANTMASTER software. "A colour coded screen tells us the status of each machine on the shop floor. An icon displays if any machine is running out of tolerance, is down or if there is a scrap alert. It has enabled us to react to problems much more quickly and further reduce our downtime," Mr Tyson stresses. "It also gives us machine efficiency reports in various graphical formats. In the past it was difficult to compare all the machines to see which gave us the poorest performance. PLANTMASTER provides this information automatically, so we can target our maintenance spend and replacement program very accurately. Even though the BarcoVision system has been a major investment, it has already given us a big pay back."

John Taylor concludes, "I believe the partnership with BMS has started in a very positive manner. I have no doubt our subsequent installations will be as successful as the first."

About RPC Group

The RPC Group is Europe's leading manufacturer of rigid plastic packaging, unique in offering products made by all three main conversion processes, blow moulding, injection moulding and thermoforming. RPC Group has over 40 autonomous sites in 12 countries, employing in excess of 6000 people. RPC services a comprehensive range of customers - the larger European manufacturers of consumer products, from companies such as Unilever and Nestlé, to small national businesses. RPC has a particularly strong position in the beauty and personal care sector, the vending and drinking cup market, the margarine industry, and in multilayer sheet and packs for oxygen sensitive food products.

About BMS-BarcoVision

BMS, established in 2007 as a carve-out from the Barco group, is a leading supplier of Manufacturing Execution Systems (MES) for discrete manufacturing, with focus on the textiles, plastics and pharmaceutical industry. Under the brand name, BarcoVision, BMS offers a wide range of systems aimed at productivity and quality improvement. BMS is present at key locations around the world, either with own branch offices or through a world wide network of agents and service centers.

www.visionbms.com

BarcoVision
In Pursuit of Productivity

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