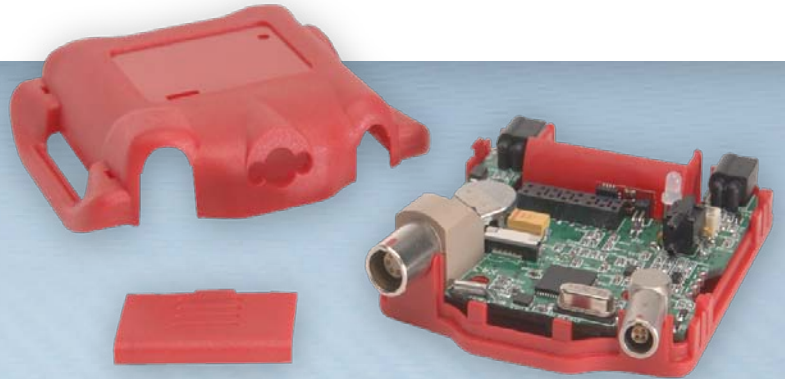# L-D Tool & Die

BETTER MANAGE ITS GROWING BUSINESS WITH CYFRAME ERP

Since 1992, L-D Tool & Die, a privately-owned mold-maker and custom injection-molding company has been designing and creating molds as well as injection-molding a range of products. The company's clients include, but are not limited to, recreational (diving knives, canteens, camping gear), medical (sterile vials for DNA sample gathering), military sub-contractors (plates and manifolds for body armor and bomb suits), communications (enclosures, wire coverings, housings) and toy firms. To satisfy its medical and military customers, the firm offers clean-room production and assembly with its portable clean-room capability and complies with a range of ISO and other standards.

Vital Statistics

▶ 55 employees, 10 injection-molding machines in a single 40,000 sq. ft. plant, custom runs of 250 to 500 pieces, common run is 5,000 pieces. Order sizes vary from 100 pieces to 1,000,000.

Key Challenges

▶ In 20 years, L-D had dramatically increased its sales volumes and customer base, but the company's infrastructure hadn't grown with it. Too few people had too much to do. L-D's silo mentality and history of operating its many departments as standalone units no longer worked. Microsoft Excel, Word and an Access database simply couldn't provide the range or depth of accurate, real-time data required to efficiently manage daily operations or make the best possible short- and long-term business decisions.

Why Cyframe

▶ User-friendly, highly intuitive, off-the-shelf, configurable, operations-and finance-oriented ERP solution specifically created for mould-makers and injection moulders. In Fullerton's own words: "CyFrame offered a cost-effective solution that was much more flexible and user-friendly with superior personalized service. It was even more affordable than comparable systems from major competitors".

Solution

▶ In 2010, L-D installed CyFrame's Oracle-based ERP system with its menu-driven Financial Management, Inventory and Purchasing, Production and Distribution, Inventory, Barcode Scanning and Real Time Machine Monitoring.

Benefits

▶ Improved profitability and customer satisfaction through enhanced cost control, improved operator efficiency, fewer defects and better traceability. Better visibility and control over a growing business through instant access to real-time and historical hard data. Continued growth without added overhead.

L-D Tool & Die, Stittsville (Ottawa), Ont.

www.ldtool.com

"CyFrame's ERP system gave L-D Tool & Die the infrastructure required to handle greater volumes and really grow the business without adding employees. We've always been profitable, but we knew that we needed an ERP system to ensure our continued success."

Managing & Planning for Short- & Long-Term Profitability & Success

L-D Tool & Die is on top of today and ready for tomorrow now that it has the seamless, fully integrated infrastructure that helps the management team manage its growth and plan for the future.

"We'd always been profitable and we wanted to keep it that way as we continued to grow. The various departments operated very independently and couldn't easily share data and information - we had a real silo mentality that made it slow going," says Iain Fullerton, Systems Manager.

Fortunately, L-D employees really knew their stuff – they simply didn't have the best possible tools at their fingertips. **They relied exclusively on Microsoft's Excel, Access database management system and Word – which meant they spent far too much time looking for the reports they needed to manage customer expectations and make the right decisions.**

"Employees knew what to track and understood the importance of sharing that information with the other departments – we just needed a system that would facilitate the tracking and sharing of data," says Fullerton.

CyFrame offered an operations- and finance-oriented ERP solution created specifically for mold-makers and injection molders. The ERP system's auto-fill and replication capabilities help reduce data-entry errors while minimizing the time users actually spend populating the fields and creating orders or reports. Best-case scenario, the **ERP does the repetitive, time-consuming tasks which frees employees up to do value-added customer communication, analysis and planning.**

"The ERP system lets us create templates for specific forms from our labels to work orders and shipping documents and the same for our strategic reports," says Fullerton. "The system helps ensure consistency by forcing users to complete things in a set order and can be programmed to complete a process only once all fields have been completed."

L-D has more control and improved planning abilities because management can see real-time and historical data pertaining to machine efficiency results, run history and costing.

"Going with Cyframe was the right decision to make. It's made customer-order management easier and provides a good history into item pricing and production," says Laurie Dickson, President.

To make sure he was committing to the right ERP system and to get all employees engaged in the new ERP system early on, Fullerton made a point of meeting with employees in every single department while doing his research. They talked about what the new system had to have as well as what would be nice to have. They looked at what data they were already collecting and why, as well as how they used it to obtain their five-year objectives.

"Do your homework and know exactly what you want in order to get the ERP system that fits your firm and employees," says Fullerton. "Make sure you have buy-in from the top down if you want employees to make the commitment to it."

Although **CyFrame's ERP is so intuitive that new users can take a look at it and understand what they need to do with very little training**, Fullerton wanted to be sure that help was nearby if needed. CyFrame's Montreal location and very efficient remote training and support capability ensured ongoing access to support and customer service.

" Some of our products use family moulds and others have multiple moulding lines that feed assembly operations along with other moulding and post-moulding operations. These were critical requirements for us and CyFrame's ERP system efficiently integrated those processes and provided us with the tools to achieve our objectives."

"The touch screens were a hit with operators who found them really easy to use - I was surprised at how well they adapted to it," says Fullerton, who nonetheless appreciates the fact that CyFrame staff are just a few hours away if required. "ERP virtually eliminated the operators' admin tasks - we're all happier when they've got their eyes on our customers' production rather than paperwork."

"Most importantly, managers and staff are all happy with the results, which makes a positive work atmosphere," says Dickson.

When supplying medical and military clients, the ability to track and instantly access product specifications, production records and test results to produce and provide the required certificates of conformance is vital. The lot numbers and product labels provide the relevant details, which are pulled from the ERP system.

"Traceability and recordkeeping are a big part of what we do for clients. They've been impressed with our ability to pull up information while they're on the phone with us," says Fullerton. "They no longer hear, 'I'll have to get back to you on that!' When communicating with clients we look and sound more professional and more on top of things. Even our product and shipping labels look better thanks to CyFrame's ERP!"

Some of our products are rather complex to manufacture, some use family moulds and others have multiple moulding lines that feed assembly operations along with other moulding and post-moulding operations. These were critical requirements for us and CyFrame's ERP system efficiently integrated those processes and provided us with the tools to achieve our objectives.

After relying on CyFrame's ERP system to track current and historical data over a two-year period, L-D has tangible evidence that in the face of increasing costs, improved cost control has helped maintain profit margins.

"To grow at the pace required by customer demand and better manage our business, we needed the ERP system's infrastructure," says Fullerton. "**We've increased production volume and sales without increasing our head count and successfully controlled costs to maintain margins without increasing the price paid by customers.**"

About Cyframe

Since 1987, CyFrame has become the leading international provider of best-of-breed ERPII web-based software solutions created specifically for small- to medium-size plastics manufacturers. CyFrame is uniquely positioned to meet the needs of plastics firms because it offers ERP systems that handle both stock and custom product and have been developed specially for injection and blow-molding, profile and sheet extrusion with thermoforming, and blown film and converting manufacturers. The company also offers integrated financial modules, e-commerce capabilities and secure customer account/profile areas. Onsite training, implementation and support services are offered as part of all CyFrame's ERP solutions.