World Precision Instruments Gains Added Precision with SYSPRO Software

World Precision Instruments

World Precision Instruments (WPI) is a global leader in TEER measurement, nitric oxide sensing, and other sophisticated instrumentation vital to physiological and medical research. The privately held company began operations in New Haven, Conn., in 1967 as a small manufacturer of amplifiers and stimulators for use in nerve, skin, and muscle research. Growing worldwide demand led to the company's 1990 move to larger facilities in Sarasota, Fla., and the subsequent establishment of offices in London, Berlin, Tokyo, and Melbourne.

A majority of WPI [1]'s sales are derived from trade shows and catalogs, the latest of which lists more than 1500 products (including data acquisition systems, digital cameras, glass capillaries, pre-pulled glass micropipettes, micro-syringe pumps, fiber optic spectrometers, micromanipulators, electrodes, and more). The company's newest products include a popular line of inexpensive micro-dissecting instruments, adjustable pipetters, and binocular microscopes.

As a full-spectrum supplier of proprietary and standard instrumentation, as well as associated "consumables", WPI enjoys a distinct competitive advantage. The company is also renowned for its ability to fashion custom products to accommodate specific research needs. Customers include independent and "in-house" research labs, schools, and hospitals.

Prior to 2002, WPI had been using a DOS-based ERP system, which, in fact, had been upgraded once. Explains Petra Adamson, IT Manager, "The system gave nothing back. In order to get information, you had to know the dictionary items and create the proper sentences. Individuals needing data from the system actually had to ask the IT department to get it."

It became apparent that to accommodate growing sales and production, the company needed a new system. So, a software search was initiated in early 2000. According to Karol Macolly, vice president, Finance, "To make the software selection a team effort, we involved representatives from every department."

After a year of reviewing various software packages, the choice was SYSPRO [2] software, an enterprise software system from Costa Mesa, Calif.-based SYSPRO USA. "It had more of the features we were looking for, plus it was the most user friendly system," says Macolly.

WPI opted for a 48-user SYSPRO software system with a variety of integrated modules, ranging from financials to Material Requirements Planning (MRP) to Landed Cost Tracking to Return Merchandise Authorization (RMA.)

WPI employs SYSPRO software on Microsoft Windows NT-based hardware to affect the stringent financial, inventory, and production controls necessary to meet the exacting combination of price, quality, and delivery required of firms that produce sophisticated instrumentation. In addition, WPI enhances the system's user friendliness through the use of SYSPRO software office automation tools and ODBC seats to provide links to associated programs.

WPI maintains an extensive inventory of more than 3,000 finished products and components. SYSPRO software's Inventory Control and Bill of Materials modules help maximize stock levels and ensure inventory availability at phases in the manufacturing process. Furthermore, SYSPRO software's Graphical Job Scheduler also enables Production Manager Glen Carlquist to trace visually the status of jobs on the production floor.

Moreover, by tracking the compatibility of individual system components, SYSPRO software's rules-based Product Configurator helps WPI readily fill orders for customized products. According to Adamson, SYSPRO software has made a dramatic difference in company efficiency. "Real-time data processing makes a real difference," she says. "All departments now have a centralized, real-time view. Sales personnel, for example, know what's in stock and what they have to sell. They can even enter orders online while on the phone with the customer."

SYSPRO software is also enabling WPI to be more responsive to its customer base. The ability to provide instant verification of phone orders, give accurate delivery dates, and speed order turnaround continues to build customer satisfaction. Moreover, WPI has added a front end, fully integrated SYSPRO CRM solution to assist sales efforts and customer service.

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