

Sustaining Growth through Continuous Improvement at Fourmark

Shoplogix Plantnode Increases Output By 10% on Injection Molding Equipment



CASE STUDY

Fourmark Inc. is a contract manufacturer of custom injection molding and related services to a variety of industries including food packaging and consumer goods, cosmetics and construction. The company operates a 25,000 sq. ft. facility in Oakville, Ontario; from which it serves markets in Canada and the U.S.

Markets served include Original Equipment Manufacturers, Automotive Aftermarket, and Architectural and Automotive Glass.

BUSINESS GOAL

The company needed to gain tighter control of their injection molding equipment, to better manage a growing number of machines, and to improve the capacity of each machine.

SOLUTION

By implementing the Plantnode solution, the company can now gather accurate, real-time data on the operation of each machine. This helps them understand areas to improve efficiency, and helps them identify true machine capacity.

Alarms notify individuals when problems arise with equipment, helping them reduce equipment idle time, and subsequently increasing productivity.

THE CHALLENGE

The main issue for Fourmark was the lack of accurate information about the performance of each piece of equipment. They needed to add some type of monitoring and data gathering device to capture accurate information; but wanted something that would provide other key functionality, such as remote access.

Fourmark also needed to find a way to proactively prevent machine downtime, in order to increase the number of hours of operation.

GROWING PAINS

Fourmark was in an enviable position: Due to demands of existing and new customers, they needed to increase the number of injection molding machines in their plant to improve production capacity.

Rapid growth meant that Fourmark had to gain tighter controls over production output. They needed a way to monitor machines on the plant floor to capture critical production data, understand machine capacity and quickly assess how well each shift was performing.

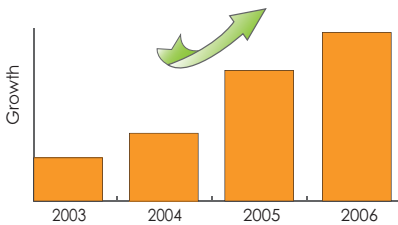


Improving Efficiency with Real-Time Accurate Information

According to Adam Cruikshank, President of Fourmark, "One of my primary considerations over and above acquiring real-time quality data was remote access. While I'm away, I can stay on top of everything happening in the plant and maintain complete control over operations from just about anywhere."

Growing to Meet Demand

Source: Fourmark Inc., 2006



Fourmark has expanded their operations to meet growing demand for custom injection molding

PLANTNODE PROVIDES INTELLIGENT MANAGEMENT OF SHOP FLOOR DATA

Shoplogix Plantnode is an intelligent performance management system designed to increase operational efficiency, improve quality, and drive higher levels of performance in discrete manufacturing environments.

Plantnode has proven effective in improving Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE), predictive and preventive maintenance, and quality initiatives across all industries.

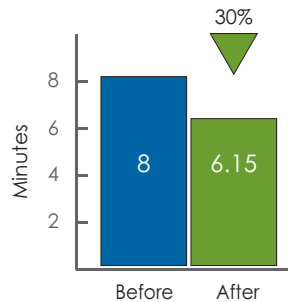
Plantnode leverages existing investments in equipment and business systems to enable operational visibility and real-time information flow that is fast enough to be actionable, with the accuracy and reliability to facilitate strategic planning and tactical execution.

IMPRESSIVE RESULTS

With Plantnode, Fourmark is now able to track the custom injection equipment, analyzing cycle times versus expectations. By capturing downtime information related to things like color changes and mold setups, and analyzing scrap rates, the company has been able to identify areas for improvement. This has resulted in a reduction in mold setup times by 30%, and has increased overall plant output by 10% to date.

Reduction in Set Up Time

Source: Fourmark Inc. 2006



Set up Time - Injection Molding

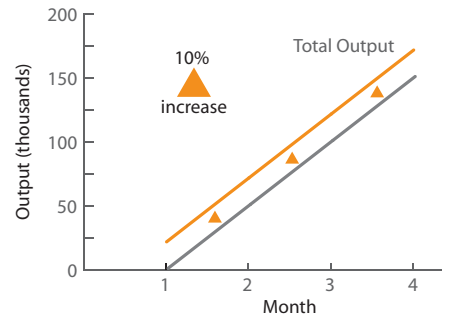
Shoplogix identified areas for improvement resulting in a 30% reduction in set up time.

Fourmark is also using the proactive alarming functionality of Plantnode, which can signal various individuals in the plant and office if something happens to any of the equipment. Mr. Cruikshank adds, "I know this product has a huge potential for us: we're only using a fraction of Plantnode's capabilities."

We look forward to expanding our use of Plantnode to our support equipment as well. The proactive alarming will help us ensure smooth, consistent operation and top quality."

Fourmark Increases Output

Source: Fourmark Inc. 2006



Since installing Plantnode as part of a continuous improvement initiative, Fourmark has seen a 10% increase in total output.



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