

## **Knowledge at Work: An SCL Client Case Study**

*New release levels of ERP packages are opportunities to revitalize the use of applications as well as add function. SCL helps this mid-sized business cope with the IT workload and re-implementation effort.*

### **Georgia Correctional Industries**

## **Upgrading ERP in a Unique Environment**

### **A Different Business**

Georgia Correctional Industries is a unique type of manufacturing organization, because only three states have correctional institutions that do not receive taxpayer funding. With headquarters in Decatur, Georgia, GCI produces over 10,000 products that are used by customers at all levels of state, federal and county government agencies.

Sometime it appears that GCI is “trying to be everything to everyone”. Major product families include cleaning supplies, clothing, footwear, bedding, office furniture and (oh yes) license plates.



GCI has 18 separate and consequently small manufacturing locations throughout Georgia. The largest are at Milledgeville and Reidsville, which have the distribution operations.

### **Some Different Issues**

Manufacturing with free direct labor is not as advantageous as it may at first appear. Only about 60% of shift time is usable, due to security and administrative issues. On average, the length of service of shop floor employees is only 120 days. Also, there is a tendency for a higher turnover of plant and production supervisors than in typical manufacturing organizations.

Accordingly, training and quality initiatives are especially important, and comprise a higher level of effort and cost than usual. In such a business, simplified but effective processes are critical for financial and administrative functions as well as for the plant floor and production.

GCI has used an ERP suite for several years, but face unique challenges in maintaining users at peak effectiveness, although they do manage to maintain very high levels of accuracy for bills of material and inventory. An ongoing audit program looks after the material specifications. With 10,000 stocked items it is creditable that they achieve 12 turns of finished goods inventory.

### **The Need to Upgrade**

Brian Stanford, the Administrative Director of GCI, has responsibility for all business functions at GCI other than plant operations and sales/marketing. After losing several key people, he decided that a re-implementation was needed with the major upgrade of their PRMS™ applications. "We needed education, consulting and some technical help. Systems Conversion Limited (SCL) was selected for these tasks because of our past dealings with them. We knew they were the best for this work."



The upgrade and revitalization project was divided into four phases:

- Validating and documenting procedures.
- Re-implementation and upgrade of the ERP applications.
- Improvement of planning and master scheduling functions.
- Implementing a data warehousing package for sales and planning.



### **Emphasis on Procedures**

For a long time GCI has invested considerable effort in maintaining quality production processes, including data evaluation and accuracy monitoring, as well for other administrative and financial procedures. "So we updated and re-wrote all our departmental procedures, to establish clear and relevant documentation on the processes and the appropriate and associated PRMS functions or tasks. The user departments created the process documentation, with this effort included in the performance targets of supervisors," states Brian.

These rejuvenated procedures were the foundation for the upgrade and revitalization of the ERP applications of PRMS, with the project team headed by the Controller, John Lundquist, and the IT Manager, Merrill Knight.

Procedural documentation will be online for the widespread user community as GCI moves to the next level of systems.

### **Driving Force**

With personnel from 16 locations, organizing the project team and meetings was not easy. Travel and logistics challenges were exacerbated, and the impact of team member absences from their smaller location workplaces was more acute.

The work of the team continues today, with an ongoing quality enhancement program for users, including re-training and training new hires.

### **Realizing the Benefits**

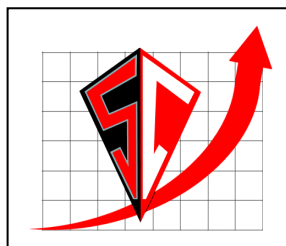
The result of the revitalization and upgrade project is a renewed interest and faith in the system. Managers, departmental users and the business as a whole are now realizing the benefits.

Brian Stanford sums up the effort: "The need for sharing information in a timely manner to internal and external customers and suppliers should be the driving force behind technological investment decisions. Today's environment demands rapid resource deployment to achieve success. Our re-implementation and upgrade provides GCI with the necessary tools to continue serving our customers and shareholders."

The next stage is to enhance the use of the planning and master scheduling applications of PRMS. To assist product and market management, with better sales and operations planning (S&OP), GCI has acquired a data warehouse and online analysis suite.

"The project went really smoothly, and in my report card I give SCL an A for their efforts," says Brian. "For our part, an A minus is about right because we could have been somewhat better organized."

***For further information on this case study or how your company can benefit from SCL services, contact us today or visit [systemsconversion.com](http://systemsconversion.com)***



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