



## Wide-ranging system benefits gained by specialist manufacturer

Martel Instruments, based in Durham, is a long established and successful manufacturer of specialist printers and printing solutions.



### Results

- Management information culture
- Answers at the click-of-a-button
- Back-trace capability
- Supported product range growth
- New complexities fully managed
- Exception reporting and fast resolution
- MRP manages component lead times
- A platform for greater competitiveness
- More time to manage opportunities
- Optimised workflow practices

**With an extensive product range, coupled with design software, tooling and manufacturing expertise, the company serves the automotive, industrial, law enforcement, medical, retail and scientific sectors and exports around 75% of its production mostly to Europe and the USA.**

As an electronics business, Martel has had to adapt to new technologies, market opportunities and response to customers' requirements. In 2007, Martel was acquired by an investment company, enabling the company to develop further as a respected manufacturer and supplier.

### A platform for growth

Based on a combination of manual recording and stand-alone, PC-based tools, Martel's systems had become increasingly inadequate. Growth was inhibited by a lack of management information, business controls and effort was being duplicated. Martel made the decision to implement a fully integrated ERP solution, heralding a big change for the company and its employees.

### Preparations for change

Martel operations manager Andrew Hockaday said, "We didn't want an off the-shelf product, but a flexible system that would provide the functionality and tools that we needed, backed by a strong organisation that would deliver long term support. Making our decision, Kerridge Commercial Systems (KCS), offered us both a 'best fit' product and a genuine partner-style approach, and from the start, we appreciated their willingness to accommodate our requirements." There were certainly some gaps to bridge and as details were worked through, Martel kept an open mind on how they would transfer their processes to K8 Manufacturing's functionality and where the system needed to fit their business specifics. The new system went live in September 2009, four months after placing the order. "There was no parallel running and by using K8 Manufacturing to develop our new quality manual, we were able to ensure that benefits and value soon began to flow."



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### A system for a people business

Andrew commented "Moving from such a basic set of system tools and familiar processes, it took a while to build everyone's confidence in the new system." Supported by the company's owners, we decided to take things one step at a time. With many employees in the company, the project enabled us to clarify job roles and help everyone to take the changes on board.

"Our 'little steps' approach has paid off and although things are still evolving as we explore the system's potential, we are establishing a trusted 'management information' culture."

### Considerable benefits

Martel has seen wide-ranging business benefits from implementing K8 Manufacturing. In headline terms, it has helped to support the growth of its product base from 200 to around 500 lines, with an estimated 3,000 variants. "In difficult trading times we have had to become more competitive to serve more customers in more sectors often with exacting requirements. As a supplier of 'peripheral' products – our products are mostly integrated into third party-supplied equipment, the system enables us to handle more complex orders. Materials planning for example, is a much more efficient and accurate process than previously. In production areas, the use of barcodes captures every process and component movement, giving us real-time visibility of what's going on and we can back trace everything if any issues arise."

Martel told us that K8 Manufacturing has freed up more time to manage the business and make the most of customer-facing situations. "On a day-to-day basis, exception reporting has made it considerably easier for us to identify and resolve issues quickly."

K8 Manufacturing's integrated functionality has enabled Martel to improve how their departments work together. "With a combination of regular call-off orders and customised projects which can have an 18 month gestation, the system is proving its worth in helping us to manage our component ordering with lead times of up to 20 weeks. And to enable orders to be delivered quickly, we use the system to help us forecast our sub-assembly requirements and economic build quantities."

### Summing up

K8 Manufacturing is clearly playing a positive role in Martel's growth and development. It has given the company tight control in every area – notably stock and cash assets and there is clearly more potential to come as its capabilities are extended. "No question about it, K8 Manufacturing runs the business and has enabled us to take the business forward. The business owners can have the information they need, when they need it and to understand the issues, constraints and opportunities that we have to manage on a day-to-day basis. The icing on the cake is a great working partnership with KCS."

### Highlights

- Ensured benefits from the start
- Best fit product and partner approach
- Great partnership with KCS

### About Kerridge Commercial Systems (KCS)

KCS provides advanced, fully integrated business systems, installation and support services for the manufacturing and field service markets, the company has over 40 years of extensive knowledge and experience of working with manufacturers, field service engineers and distributors across many sectors. Our class leading solutions are functionally rich and highly flexible.

Our solutions have a track record of delivering wide ranging benefits including greater operational efficiency and cost savings, resource and asset utilisation, together with real-time information for management decision making.

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