

Who Makes Progress™ in Manufacturing

"To be better and faster than our competition, we needed state-of-the-art efficiency and performance. Encompix's integrated system helped us become more efficient and cost-effective. It reduced our costs by 20%, improved cycle time by 30%, and dramatically improved our access to accurate information."

*Nathan Weaks
Treasurer
Automatic Feed Company*

Automatic Feed Company and Encompix™



Automatic Feed Company, Inc. (AFC) is a \$40 million premier machine tool manufacturer based in Napoleon, Ohio, that serves the major U.S. and Japanese automakers. To achieve break-through performance AFC identified 10 key areas in which they needed to be better than any of their competitors. In just 12 months Encompix Software delivered break-through results.

Top Ten List is a Tall Order for New ERP

AFC designs, engineers, and manufactures multi-million dollar complex machines that have as many as 15,000 parts with 150 employees in two facilities. As AFC has faced increasingly heated global competition, they needed to increase efficiency and reduce costs because their existing manufacturing system lacked the advanced integration capabilities necessary for CAD, materials, job costing and quoting, quality, and vendor performance reporting systems.

Nathan Weaks, AFC's Treasurer, explained, "Our existing system was integrated for its time, but the systems of today go even further. We wanted to better integrate our CAD system with the bill of materials, integrate our sales quoting better with our costing and supporting processes, and make information about the best manufacturing times that we've done on a job more accessible to the team member who is involved in making that equipment."

\$40,000,000

ANNUAL REVENUE

168,500

SQUARE FOOT FACILITY

15,000

PARTS IN THE AVERAGE MACHINE
THEY ENGINEER AND BUILD

30%

REDUCTION IN CYCLE TIME

20%

DECREASE IN PRODUCTION COSTS
USING ENCOMPIX SOLUTION

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DATABASE ADMINISTRATORS

Simplify Your Business.

ENCOMPIX
CONCEPT TO COMPLETION

PROGRESS
SOFTWARE

Problem

AFC faced global competition and needed break-through technology to dramatically reduce project completion times and reduce costs.

Decision

A state-of-the-art integrated ERP system would link AFC's many stand-alone systems, improving visibility and efficiency throughout the enterprise.

Solution

AFC selected the Encompix ERP system to deliver break-through solutions that integrate the entire manufacturing process, including accounting, costing, quoting, quality, scheduling, and human resources.

Results

Encompix has produced a 20% cost reduction, a 30% improvement in cycle time, and vast improvements in visibility, all of which strengthened AFC's competitive advantage.

In addition, AFC needed more flexible text and remarks capabilities and wanted to integrate their QS9000 quality system with the manufacturing system. AFC also wanted to integrate project management and scheduling to enable tracking and reporting progress on each project. Lastly, AFC sought to improve their human resources record keeping. And they wanted to accomplish all of this in six months.

"Those were the tangible things we were looking for in our new software," said Weaks. When it came to the software finalists, the intangibles had their effect. Trust takes business a long way. We want as high a degree of confidence and trust as possible in any company we deal with. We felt we could put that trust in Encompix."

Encompix Provides Comprehensive, Flexible Solution

AFC put their trust in Progress partner Encompix's solid domain expertise, low cost of ownership, and commitment to accommodating AFC's unique requirements. "Encompix is set up well to handle most of the issues that machine tool companies face," said Weaks. "Encompix's project managers have worked with other machine tool companies, so they have a pretty good idea of the business process involved. But our company is different from other machine tool makers in that the size of the project we work with is considerably larger than average." AFC's average project is in the \$3 to \$5 million range, with literally thousands of parts manufactured for any given machine. "The Encompix team quickly gained an understanding that we weren't typical, and they were able to accommodate our unique requirements," said Weaks.

The AFC implementation team involved representatives from accounting, costing, sales, MIS, scheduling, production, service, project management, human resources, and purchasing. The team worked in close collaboration with their Encompix project manager and had clearly defined tasks and deadlines. "We came up with a solid model of how our jobs should flow," Weaks explained. "We tested our model on past data, ran simulations, and trained end users. One of the things that stood out about Encompix was the training. Compared to other systems, Encompix has given us better training and better project management." AFC and Encompix completed the system implementation on time, and on budget.

Well-Placed Trust Delivers Reliability and Results

Encompix has produced several competitive advantages for AFC. Most significantly, Encompix has produced a 20% cost reduction and a 30% reduction in cycle time. AFC needed to reduce costs to maintain their leadership position when the U.S. economy slowed down and global competition heated up. They recently completed a \$4 million project in just seven months, or 30% less time than usual. Their international business has flourished, with projects in progress throughout Asia, South Africa, and Russia.

"One area is in conversion of materials," said Weaks. We may buy steel by the pound, but issue it by the inch. With the Encompix system, we have to do very little conversion.



AFC designs, engineers, and manufactures multi-million dollar complex machines that have as many as 15,000 parts for major U.S. and Japanese automakers.

Today AFC is running Encompix using the Progress database with 35 concurrent users. Because the fully integrated ERP system requires minimal administration, AFC has no dedicated database administrator. "This Progress system is like the Energizer Bunny®," says Weaks. "It just keeps going and going."

We can, in effect, buy in the same quantity that we issue. That reduces the chance of calculation errors and makes everything run more smoothly."

AFC has leveraged the system's text and remarks capabilities and eliminated the manual logs that were kept on the shop floor. "Now we can use Encompix's remarks capabilities to attach notes about difficulties and ideas to improve projects right in the system, where the engineer can access them easily, and where they can do the most good," Weaks said.

Today AFC is running Encompix using the Progress database with 35 concurrent users. Because the fully integrated ERP system requires minimal administration, AFC has no dedicated database administrator. Three employees in manufacturing, administration, and engineering manage any system needs in their areas, as well as their regular duties. "This Progress system is like the Energizer Bunny," quipped Weaks. "It just keeps going and going."

AFC maintains a tradition of customer focus—they have never lost a customer—and they intend to keep it that way. Weaks concluded, "With more and better information at our disposal, we can accomplish more, and we can be better and faster than our competition. Encompix has given us state-of-the-art efficiency and performance. Now we have an integrated system that helps us operate with less redundancy and reliance on stand-alone systems or spreadsheets."

About Encompix

Encompix provides enterprise resource planning software and services designed specifically for the complex business environment of engineer-to-order and project-based manufacturers. Believing that "one size does not fit all," they provide customers with a competitive advantage by improving bottom-line results. Inherent in Encompix's vision is the nurturing of partnerships to develop applications that match customers' specific business processes. Encompix builds business relationships based on integrity and value that will last a lifetime.

About the Progress Company

The Progress Company is a global supplier of software and services that simplify the development, deployment, integration, and management of business applications. The Progress® OpenEdge™ platform, with the industry's leading embedded database, delivers lowest cost-of-ownership applications that are rapidly implemented and easily integrated with other enterprise, extended enterprise, and Internet applications.

With the expertise of more than 2,000 independent software vendors (ISVs) and application service providers (ASPs), the Progress Company and its application partners supply more than \$5 billion annually in Progress technology, Progress-based applications, and related services. Progress customers span 50,000 organizations in more than 120 countries including 70 percent of the Fortune 100.

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