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Radius Systems Implements SYSPRO with DataRapt to clear the information pipeline

Leading plastic pipe systems manufacturer and services supplier has begun a revolutionary project to implement an advanced computer system for its multisite operations.

The 100-user fully integrated SYSPRO ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system from K3 Business Technology Group (K3) will create a more comprehensive information infrastructure across Radius Systems' business, bringing greater visibility and control to its operations. The company is also taking advantage of the innovative sub-ledger reconciliation software called DataRapt. An interview with Anne Burton, the firm's Business Controller, gave an insight into the progress of the project.

Radius Systems has been supplying leading utilities companies with its plastic pipes, fittings and services since 1969. It has facilities in Derbyshire, County Durham, Northern Ireland and Dubai enabling the company to service customers in over 100 countries.

"The new system is already benefiting the business. We now have a comprehensive Bills of Materials and clear visibility of stock and WIP" says Anne Burton.

At a glance

Company

Radius Systems

Industry sector

Manufacturing
• Plastic pipe system manufacturer

SIC Code

22290 - Manufacture of other plastic products

Number of employees

450 +

The challenge

• Gain a clearer view of operations and costs
• Boost customer service
• Replace disparate legacy systems

Solution & services

• SYSPRO Financials
• SYSPRO Manufacturing
• SYSPRO Distribution
• Material Requirements Planning
• Work in Progress
• Bill of Materials

The benefits

• More comprehensive information infrastructure
• Greater visibility and controls
• Easier, faster accounting
• Clear visibility of stock and Work in Progress
• Detailed, timely information
• Easier, quicker month-end processing

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To gain a clearer view of its operations, costs, and boost customer service, the company is transforming its business systems across its UK sites with a fully integrated and user friendly SYSPRO ERP and DataRapt software solution. This user-friendly and powerful enterprise-wide solution replaces disparate legacy systems.
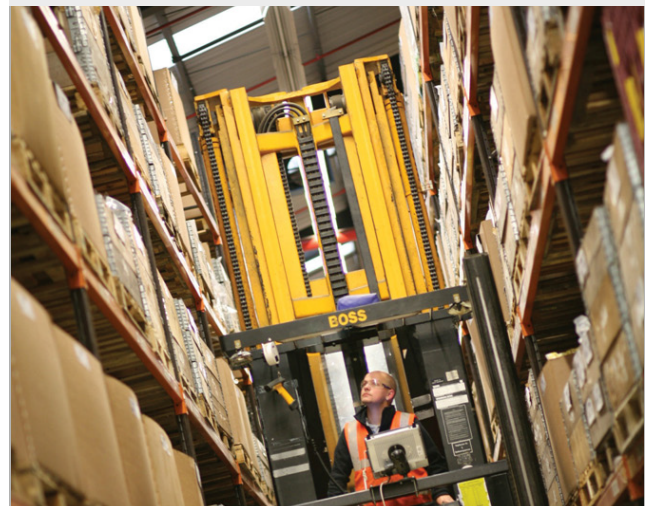
The project has taken a phased approach to the ERP system implementation, with the Northern Ireland site having been successfully implemented first with the remaining UK sites to follow.

In Northern Ireland, the system replaces a bespoke inventory and accounting system, whereas it will replace legacy ERP systems used at its other sites.

Radius Systems drafted in help from K3 Managed Services to get Northern Ireland up and running on the system. K3 Managed Services supports firms with every aspect of their IT management infrastructure with a wide range of services covering network implementation and network support. These range from a reactive support desk service to the complete design, supply, implementation and proactive support of a brand new network infrastructure. This specialist support compensated for the lack of IT capability at the facility and has smoothed the transition to SYSPRO for the 20 on-site users and a further 15 remote users based at the Derbyshire facility.

> "DataRapt also helps with educating users out of making errors such as incorrect and partial postings. I'd recommend this software utility to be used with all ERP implementations as it boosts the value of the system."

"K3 Managed Services support was excellent. Having a specialist on site meant that we made good progress from the training programme, to going live. The system is hosted at our Derbyshire site, with Northern Ireland using Terminal Services to access it," says Anne Burton, Radius Systems' Business Controller.

SYSPRO provides an end-to-end solution

In Northern Ireland, the company has implemented the essential end-to-end core functionality of manufacturing, logistics and accounting. The addition of Advanced Planning and Scheduling (APS) and Advanced Quality Management (AQM) modules will follow once the system is fully bedded in. Anne Burton reports that the flexibility to add more modules and functionality to SYSPRO was one of the key reasons for choosing it.

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"SYSPRO has a familiar Windows-style look and feel. It also allows us to extend the solution when we are ready. Our current set up is 'vanilla' SYSPRO – and this standard core functionality will make a big difference to the way we work. The ability to add APS and AQM modules is essential to our operation," she says.

The system takes over from the point of Sales Order entry and triggers Materials Required Planning to drive Works Orders through manufacturing. It monitors production through Work in Progress (WIP) inspection and the finished products to stock and out through shipping. The information feeds through seamlessly to the General Ledger making accounting easier and faster.

"The new system in Northern Ireland is already benefiting the business. The system is integrated and replaces the need to journal sales and stock movements into the ledger. We now have a comprehensive Bills of Materials and clear visibility of stock and WIP," says Anne Burton. "Bearing in mind that we are only using standard reporting, we now have detailed, timely information. We can report margins and we don't need to duplicate data entry. The system is set up to report on gross margins too, making it easier and quicker to close down month-end accounts. In every case we can see the cost of each sale."

Automating ledger reconciliation

To eliminate the effect of user error, Radius Systems has opted to also implement DataRapt sub-ledger reconciliation software. This enables SYSPRO users to monitor, maintain and prove the integrity of their accounts. It helps to identify mistakes and quickly rectify them without the need for time-consuming cross-referencing and checking.

"Imbalances in the system are usually because of user errors. Normally to correct the problems you have to trawl through and across the accounts and run various reports to identify where the mistake has occurred before you can correct it. With DataRapt you can save a lot of time and effort as it helps to identify where the error was made and it walks you through the process of correcting the error. It soon earns its keep. DataRapt also helps with educating users out of making errors such as incorrect and partial postings. I'd recommend this software utility to be used with all ERP implementations as it boosts the value of the system," says Anne Burton.

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Looking to the future

Work on implementing the system across the remaining UK sites is progressing well. Once all sites are live, K3 will implement its DataSwitch integration software to give visibility across the entire business. Using a customised window, each site will be able to see stocks held at each facility making it possible to sell it and reduce stockholdings. The DataSwitch solution simplifies data importing and exporting tasks. For example, a purchase order raised in any one of the company's sites will automatically create a sales order. When that order is invoiced, the required products are transferred automatically from whichever site holds the stock. This removes waste, overproduction and excess stock.