



MADE2MANAGE™
S Y S T E M S

CUSTOMER PROFILE

"The high level of visibility that the system provides helps us run our business more efficiently and be more competitive. And we can pass those efficiencies on to our customers."

Michele Mancuso-Krollman, Vice President of Marketing and Information Technology, Elrae Industries, Inc.



Elrae Industries, Inc.

Elrae Industries Keeps on Rolling With Made2Manage

Elrae Industries, Inc., a leading producer of stamped and roll-formed metal components as well as custom assemblies, was doing everything right. Due to its focus on customer service and quality—including ISO9002 and QS-9000 certification—this Alden, NY-based company has enjoyed consistent growth since its formation in 1946. By the late 1990s, the company was becoming overwhelmed by the speed of its own expansion.

According to Michele Mancuso-Krollman, vice president of marketing and information technology, the company was struggling to meet customer demands in an increasingly fast-moving and competitive business environment. "In addition to the impending Y2K issue, we were having difficulties with on-time deliveries and shipping deadlines. Basically we didn't feel that the system we had could handle what we needed to do to remain successful."

In the search for a new system, Elrae Industries, Inc. focused on finding a powerful scheduling software solution. But as the company began to investigate further, it realized that other business processes could be improved with a new enterprise-wide business system. "We looked closely at several products including the Made2Manage Enterprise Business System, which appeared so user-friendly and straightforward that some of us were concerned that it wouldn't have much power behind it," says Mancuso-Krollman, "But, as it turned out, that's one of the big advantages of Made2Manage. It has a simple graphical user interface but very sophisticated technology underneath."



Elrae Industries, Inc. selected Made2Manage from Indianapolis-based Made2Manage Systems Inc. for its unified front-office, back-office and production system. The management software features all the necessary transactional systems—quoting, inventory control, purchasing, scheduling, shipping/receiving and more—as well as Customer Relationship Management (M2M CRM) and Supply Chain Management (M2M SCM) options. The system went live in June 1999, and passed through Y2K without a hitch.

Providing Better Visibility

According to Mancuso-Krollman, the biggest benefit of implementing the Made2Manage system is the high level of visibility it provides into all aspects of the company's business operations. "In the contract-manufacturing/metal-forming industry, accurately tracking job costs is vital," she says. "The nice thing about Made2Manage is that you can see all the jobs you're running in real time. That means we can see immediately if costs are starting to get skewed. In conjunction with extensive data collection, we get an accurate snapshot of our business because the information is always current. This enables us to analyze critical data so we know exactly where we are in regard to cost as well as where the problems are."

Elrae Industries, Inc. uses the Made2Manage system to run a number of detailed reports, including a job order status report. The company's foreman and accounting manager use this information to monitor individual jobs and overall efficiency. Because it is easy to spot where problems have occurred, departments can be held accountable. The Made2Manage system also plays an important role in the company's continuous improvement effort and its total quality management and just in time (JIT) philosophy.



According to Mancuso-Krollman, one of the most important features of the new system is Command Scheduler. "It is great for running reports or programs automatically at scheduled times. If processing takes a long time, we can run the program or report at night, which frees up time during the business day," she says.

Improving Inventory Accuracy

Using information gathered from Made2Manage, Elrae Industries, Inc. put together a team specifically to improve inventory accuracy. "With details such as received shipments, job allocation, back-flushed items, who did what and when, we were able to identify where inventory issues were occurring and why," says Mancuso-Krollman. "From when we went live, we have increased inventory accuracy by more than 40 percent. There was a time when we had so much coiled steel stacked up we couldn't get any more into the facility. Today, we don't have a lot of unnecessary inventory, which is how it should be for a JIT manufacturer."

Bar-Coding Efficiencies

The system's integrated bar-coding capabilities have been another major benefit to Elrae Industries, Inc.. "We have about 60 employees. With the old system, we would have efficiency sheets, which were really just time sheets that the foreman would fill out all day long," explained Mancuso-Krollman. "Someone in accounting would enter the labor for the day and this could take up to half a day to do. If we got behind because of 'month end' for example, we were sometimes faced with three to four days of labor entries that had to be entered into the system. And sometimes we had to manually keep track

of inventory, which was a major issue. The new system's bar-coding capabilities have enabled us to free up all of that time. We now use bar coding for our time and attendance and labor/job order collection so when we need to do payroll every week, all the hours are right there. This was a big transition that has saved a lot of time and costs."

Mancuso-Krollman has been equally impressed with the post-implementation support she has received from Made2Manage. "Training and customer support have been very good, and we can always get quick answers to our questions."

According to Mancuso-Krollman, the company relies on M2M Expert for quick resolution to common issues. M2M Expert is a Web-based repository of solutions and information—FAQs, technical bulletins and downloadable utilities, as well as computer- and Web-based training that Made2Manage customers can use to answer questions and resolve issues.



VIP Treatment

Currently, Elrae Industries, Inc. has implemented all modules of the Made2Manage Enterprise Business System except Customer Service. According to Mancuso-Krollman, the company has been so impressed with the implementation of the new business software that it plans to enhance the system's capabilities in the near future. "We're considering an upgrade to Made2Manage's VIP next year, which we will use to offer advanced customer service options to our core customer group. M2M VIP is an Internet-based service that enables manufacturers to extend the functionality of their Web presence to include powerful customer care, commerce and collaboration applications. A low-cost, low-risk, quickly implemented solution, M2M VIP empowers companies to fully leverage the combination of the Internet and their existing Made2Manage back-office environment. Hosted by Made2Manage and integrated with the Made2Manage back-office system, M2M VIP provides manufacturers with a powerful means of extending customer service, conducting e-commerce and collaborating with customers to speed and streamline the design-to-production process.

"We are also considering the addition of Powerway, a document control system to better manage our ISO 9002 and QS9000 systems. We will use it to maintain document control, PPAP's, and corrective actions. Eventually we hope expand its use so that ALL company policies and procedures are online," she says.

Valuable Business Benefits

Mancuso-Krollman believes that the Made2Manage system has provided Elrae Industries, Inc. with many value-added capabilities. "We now have a much better handle on our business and where money is going. Not only do we have detailed information on inventory and job costs for example, but everyone believes those numbers are accurate," she says. "The high level of visibility that the system provides helps us run our business more efficiently and be more competitive. And we can pass those efficiencies on to our customers."

Mancuso-Krollman says that the Made2Manage system is like "night and day" compared to the company's former system. "Our old system had an interface based on a UNIX database and that was really confusing to use. Also, we never took the time with other packages to use them properly because they were so intimidating. Made2Manage was so easy to implement and use that we are leveraging everything the system has to offer."

This year Elrae's marketing campaign focuses on "Innovative Solutions," something the company coined, "INNOVATIONS." "Mancuso-Krollman says, "Made2Manage Systems is just one more way Elrae offers innovative solutions to its customers."