

## Prism Powder Coatings: Full-Spectrum Benefits With Sage PFW

All around us, metal objects that seem to be painted are actually powder coated, an environmentally friendly, long-lasting technology that uses thermal-reactive polymers, pigments, and curing agents. You'll find powder coating on the shelving in big retail stores, on tractors and lawnmowers, and on metal furniture. Many of these coatings come from Prism Powder Coatings in Ontario, Canada.

Prism typically produces custom orders, with colors carefully matched to the coater's specifications. Orders can be as small as 55 pounds or large volume batch sizes. This makes it difficult and time-consuming for Prism to keep accurate records and produce meaningful production reports—a problem exacerbated by the antiquated DOS-based manufacturing software it had been using.

### Instant Inventory Checks

"We were just completing the conversion to Sage PFW when I joined the company in 2003," says Jameson Varatharajah, controller. "I've seen many positive changes as a result of the implementation."

Today, Prism uses the Sage PFW ERP system with a full suite of process manufacturing and financial modules to manage every aspect of its business. The system automatically receives orders, manages formula requirements, commits raw materials, maintains real-time inventory, notifies customer service of production status, creates packing slips, and performs invoicing.

"The fact that Sage PFW keeps accurate inventory records is extremely helpful to us," explains Varatharajah. "When a customer places an order, we know immediately whether we have the materials in stockwork," to fulfill the order. We have thousands of different formulas, many that are specific to an individual customer, so assuring sufficient inventory can be complicated and time-consuming. By automating our inventory checks, the software eliminates human error as well as the workload of several people."

### Customer

**Prism Powder Coatings Ltd.**

### Industry

Manufacturing—Powder Coatings

### Location

Concord, Ontario

### Number of Locations

Two

### Number of Employees

70

### System

**Sage PFW**

### Modules in Operation

Production  
Formula  
Inventory Pro  
Accounts Receivable  
Accounts Payable  
Bank Book  
General Ledger  
Multi-Currency Manager  
Purchasing Pro  
Order Entry Pro  
MSDS

### Challenge

DOS-based manufacturing software was slow and cumbersome, resulting in delays in production decisions, waste, and higher inventory costs due to overordering.

### Solution

Sage PFW with the complete suite of core accounting and process manufacturing modules, integrating production and financial data.

### Results

Greater accuracy in the ordering process has reduced need for several people checking inventory; system shaved two days' work off of monthly closing tasks and overall efficiencies improved by 20 percent.

## Easy Currency Exchanges and MSDS

Although Prism is headquartered in Canada, more than half of its purchases are made in U.S. dollars. "We use the Multi-Currency Manager module in Sage PFW very heavily," Varatharajah notes. "The software makes automatic currency conversions for us. All I have to do is enter the current market rate, and the module calculates the exchange gain or loss at the end of each month. If we had to do this manually, it would be a terrific headache."

The MSDS module plays an important role too. Prism's products are classified as chemicals, so the company must provide material safety data sheets (MSDSs) with each product to meet both Canadian and U.S. government requirements. "The regulations are slightly different for the two countries," says Varatharajah. "We use Sage PFW to export information and copy it to a separate database, for faster documentation. It's hard to imagine how we might accomplish this for our thousands of products without the software."

## Better Balancing

But it is the costing analysis capabilities built into Sage PFW that Varatharajah appreciates the most. "Any controller knows what a nightmare it usually is to balance costing modules in software," he explains. "We must calculate how much each formula costs and compare this with the cost of goods sold in the financial modules. Most of my colleagues in similar positions work late at the end of every month to prepare these figures. Sage PFW makes the task easy and has trimmed at least two days from my monthly workload."

Varatharajah says he frequently recommends Sage PFW to controllers of other process manufacturers. "I've used competing software in other positions, and Sage PFW is one of the best on the market," he notes. "It has cut the queries I receive from our manufacturing plants in half and improved our overall efficiency by 20 percent."

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— Jameson Varatharajah  
Controller  
Prism Powder Coatings, Ltd.

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