

Mission not impossible - seamless integration

Providing a complete software solution for manufacturing companies may seem like an impossible task but JAAS Systems took up the challenge



JAAS Systems, a Columbus, Ohio software developer had a dual mission: use the distribution/financial strength of Microsoft Business Solutions Solomon product line to provide a complete solution for manufacturing companies. At the same time, JAAS wanted to develop its product to look like Solomon so the integration was transparent to the end user. "We have had a pretty interesting history to get to this point," says Fred Szumlic, JAAS's vice president of sales and marketing. "Originally we had made a presentation to a local manufacturing company that needed stronger accounting capabilities than its current system provided. The CFO really liked the General Ledger and Inventory modules of Solomon, but knew that without manufacturing software it would not be moving forward. We came up with the idea of developing

manufacturing software. At first we thought that it would take too much time to bring the product to market. The more we investigated writing it around Solomon, the more we saw the excellent platform Solomon provided for our product. Solomon has always had a strong reputation for its accounting systems and technology innovations, we felt that this foundation would enable JAAS to quickly and efficiently develop its software system. Working with Solomon also provided another advantage," says Szumlic, "they had a network of resellers already in place worldwide. Many of which had manufacturing clients that were looking for solutions. These factors contributed to the decision to develop JAAS Advanced Manufacturing Software (JAMS)." "From day one the whole design concept was to develop in the

Solomon environment," states Gary James, JAAS Systems president. "Our goal was to keep the look and feel consistent with Solomon. Since JAAS' prospects and clients are both direct and end users of our VAR channel, making the system seamless to Solomon elevated their comfort level with JAMS." Case in point is MITEQ, a Long Island, New York-based manufacturer of high performance components and subsystems for the microwave electronics community. MITEQ had already selected Solomon for its accounting and distribution systems. MITEQ had also selected a system that while worked with Solomon, did not integrate to the degree MITEQ's management wanted. To quote David Faverio, vice president and chief financial officer of MITEQ: "JAMS is so tightly integrated with the Solomon System that users do not know when they are going from a Solomon to a JAMS module." With 75 Solomon users on its system, MITEQ was looking for a more robust solution to address its manufacturing requirements. Key functionality MITEQ was looking for included:

- Reducing inventory on hand
- Having the correct inventory on hand
- Meeting customer delivery requirements even on custom units
- Responding to customer requests as to the status of their units

Faverio contacted JAAS Systems to inquire about JAMS. After a review of its requirements and a web presentation, MITEQ selected JAMS. MITEQ now has better visibility into the thousands of projects it has in-house at any one time. It is better able to manage all aspects of production and deal with potential issues before they become a crisis.

Another important requirement was in the issue of inventory control. By taking advantage of JAMS' MRP system, MITEQ is now able to see potential problems areas and deal with them before they become a serious issue. As Faverio says, "MITEQ has been able to better manage its inventory and purchases, significantly improving its operating cash flow."

Currently JAMS consists of the following modules: Bill of Material/Routing, Production Management, Material Requirements Planning (MRP), and Capacity Requirements Planning (CRP). This year two new modules have been

released, Product Configurator and Release Accounting. The Product Configurator module provides a 'rules based system' designed around features and options logic. The Product Configurator is designed to allow companies to sell an item with variable configurations. When the Product Configurator is used, the options included for the manufacturer's customer are decided at order time.

The Release Accounting module converts Solomon into a Release based accounting system. With the integration of EDI, the customer maps their existing EDI software to the Release Accounting tables. Release Accounting calculates what needs to be manufactured and shipped based on the customer release ship information.

By accomplishing their 'impossible mission', JAAS Systems is helping manufacturers worldwide to enhance their productivity and operations. As Robert Carson, Production Manager states, "What JAMS provides to manufacturing are the tools to make valid schedules. Production orders are managed by lead times, material allocation and the resources required for on-time completion. MITEQ now has the ability to track production from the planning stage, in process flow, and completion to stock through the seamless integration of engineering product definition to a production order." ←

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