

PRMS V10.0 Multifacility Implementation and Business Process Re-Alignment through Harmonizing Business Processes and PRMS

A Case Study of the Solar Group Inc, A Gibraltar Company

The Foundation

As part of a corporate wide undertaking to standardize the ERP platform for the Storage and Ventilation division of Gibraltar Industries, it was decided that the Solar Group would migrate its ERP database from its existing DBSI database to Infor's PRMS V10.0 multifacility ERP application.

To accomplish this task, Hunter Business Group Inc (HBG) was chosen to lead the project.

As is the case in these instances, steps were then initiated to align, integrate and improve the Solar Group's business processes using PRMS V10.0 multi facility, the ERP platform of the ventilation division. This improvement included moving the manufacturing operation of the Solar Group from a discreet manufacturing process to and orderless, continuous flow manufacturing process. Also, during the PRMS V10.0 multi facility implementation process, The Solar Group purchased another manufacturing company and as a result, the scope of the project was broadened to include the absorption of the manufacturing operations of the acquired company. This involved the defining and setup of capacity tools and business processes so as to assist The Solar Group in managing these expanded manufacturing requirements so that the responsiveness to the customer requirements was not diminished.

Defining the Business Processes

To accomplish this task, as a first step of the methodology, HBG conducted a short and productive Process Alignment Workshop. The aim of this exercise was to develop an understanding of the effectiveness and efficiencies of key business processes and to develop a plan of action for the process improvements that were identified, an assessment of business risks (and how to mitigate these risks and maximize the opportunities), identification of process owners, determination of their accountability and responsibilities during the overall project and last but not least, to bench mark best practices brought by HBG business consultants using easy to follow templates.

Although, this business process review was independent of the ERP/PRMS package that was to be implemented, it was a vital first step in the understanding of the business and business models so that the ERP/PRMS package could be quickly configured to match the newly aligned operational needs of the company. As a first pass in reviewing the business processes in the areas of Demand Management, Customer Order Fulfillment, Manufacturing Planning, Manufacturing Execution, Performance and Financial Reporting, the process owners came to the following conclusions. One that they were very effective in what they did (by this we mean that these processes were needed to run the business) and two, that there was numerous opportunities to improve their defined business practices. A few of these opportunities were the implementation of a orderless, continuous flow manufacturing operation (replacing the discrete work

order driven manufacturing process), utilization of the PRMS V10.0 multi facility functionality to manage their facilities and expanded capacity tools to manage both their short and long term capacity requirements.

Unique Challenges

The most common comment made by the process owners was, “we need all of these processes to run the business and we do them very well. We have done so successfully for many years. What we require is to move these processes over, as they are, into the new system.”

Now, no one truly believed the veracity of these comments, so a second pass was undertaken to define and refine the processes.

After numerous challenges to the underlying assumptions of the process owners, a clearer picture of the actual business processes of the company began to appear. Processes were identified that did not change the content of the information. These processes were “control only” or “check only”. Since these processes added no value to the operation, they became candidates for review, improvement or discontinuance. Similarly, processes were identified that were highly informal or relied on certain people’s tribal knowledge or outside databases such as Excel spreadsheets, to complete. These processes could then be improved by utilizing the improved functionality of the new system and its multi facility capability and better business practices. Likewise, those processes that were deemed low in both efficiency and effectivity became candidates for discontinuance.

Also, the purchase and amalgamation of another company during the PRMS V10.0 implementation presented The Solar Group with an opportunity to refine how they handled their capacity requirements (both in the short term and long term) and to fine tune their production lines and manufacturing business processes.

Defining Business Models and Process Improvements

In conjunction with these business process reviews, new business models were developed by the company to better reflect how the company actually did business. The company therefore became better equipped to take advantage of new methods of operation and the enhanced functionalities of the PRMS V10.0 multi facility system to be implemented (such as life cycle codes for new product introductions and managing obsolete products to utilizing PRMS V10.0’s project management capabilities for their capital assets). The business process improvement process therefore offered a means for the efficient and effective use of the enterprise data. By now defining and understanding their business processes and utilizing the functionalities and database capabilities of the PRMS V10.0 system, everyone in the company had the ability to see the same real time data. This thus translated into improved customer responsiveness, reduced non-value added activities and a road map to assist the Solar Group on its quest to become a “lean” organization.

Another example of the process improvements revolved around the moving of the manufacturing processes from a discrete work order driven business process to a repetitive, orderless continuous flow manufacturing process. This move better reflected

the way that The Solar Group was doing business and allowed for the planners and production personnel to see real time manufacturing and capacity information so as to better manage the customer requirements.

Real Results and Real Improvements

At the completion of the implementation of the new PRMS V10.0 multi facility application from their existing DBSI database, The Solar Group had a fully integrated system, which was configured to meet their business needs now and into the future. The redefined business processes met the objective of the company to have the real time data needed to support the business strategy and a plan for moving forward with their lean manufacturing initiatives so as to become a “lean” company.

This PRMS V10.0 multifacility implementation project was completed on time and within budget, even with the inclusion of an unexpected purchase and amalgamation of an existing manufacturing operation.

This business process improvement initiative and the deployment of a fully configured PRMS V10.0 multi facility application (with minimum changes) within the mandated time frame could not have been done without a sound implementation methodology specially designed to deliver, within budget, the large project scope. HBG’s “Process Alignment Methodology” accomplished precisely these objectives.

This process alignment methodology has been a hallmark of Hunter Business Group’s success throughout the years.

For more information contact on Hunter Business Group Inc. (HBG) and HBG’s total PRMS re-alignment solutions, call 1-800-263-0193, email hunter@ica.net or visit our web site at www.hunter-inc.com.