



ERP solutions for the Plastic Industry

**ACCURATE
REALTIME DATA
ENSURES PROFITABILITY
AND TRACEABILITY**



Calico Precision Molding designs and produces custom parts and components for the automotive, aerospace, military, medical, dental, commercial and packaging sectors.

Vital Statistics

- ▶ There are 53 employees managing and operating 16 injection molding machines and five assembly/welding machines to produce a roster of 150 to 200 parts for about 40 customers at the 55,000 sq. ft. plant in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Key Challenges

- ▶ To manage Calico's significant growth as the company triples sales from 2014 to 2016, management had two choices: hire new employees in at least three departments or find a suitable ERP solution. Calico also needed to be able to precisely assess the profitability of its business, which had been virtually impossible with inaccurate, outdated or non-existent data. In short, Calico's executives didn't have the data required to manage the business in a manner that maximized productivity, efficiency and profitability.

As well, a significant Tier 1 automotive customer required traceability and wanted EDI capabilities as well as a web-based customer portal and advanced shipping notice.

Why CyFrame?

- ▶ Calico committed to CyFrame's ERP based on its ability to provide, accurate real-time data in relevant reports. It also offered web-based customer portals, bar coding and more.

Solution

Calico now relies exclusively on CyFrame's complete ERP solution: Financial Management, Inventory and Purchasing, Production and Distribution, including real time shop floor bar-code touch screen data acquisition, web-based customer portal and advanced shipping notice.

Benefits

- ▶ CyFrame's ERP provides the realtime, accurate data required to tell Calico's business story and maximize profitability day to day, week to week and year over year.
- ▶ Calico is better able to manage inventory, materials and operations to improve productivity and efficiency, while its new traceability and EDI capabilities also satisfy the automotive-industry suppliers who account for about 80% of Calico's business.

Calico Precision Molding
Fort Wayne, Indiana
calicopm.com



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“CyFrame’s ERP has made Calico a data-driven company that knows exactly how much money it’s making or losing daily. Our new ERP is also saving us at least \$60,000 annually”
Calvin Shannon, Jr., president and owner Calico Precision Molding

Right now, Calico, a successful, mid-sized plastic and rubber custom injection molder, has big dreams for an even brighter future.

To take the company to the next level, Calico’s management team needed to know which SKUs and production runs were profitable day to day which meant assessing material and production costs to make better decisions around everything from resource allocation to operational optimization and costs to customers.

“We had two choices: implement CyFrame’s ERP solution or hire additional staff across at least three departments to handle the additional data, planning and management requirements.”

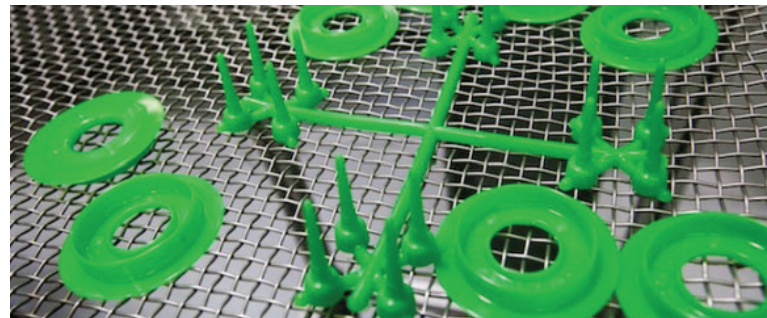
Calico and its executive team had been relying on its operators to manually enter the inventory, materials, operational and production data at the end of a shift, but knew that molding and shipping the products had to be their top priority. While the legacy systems didn’t adversely affect customers, their orders or delivery, they certainly impeded Calico managers’ ability to run a profitable business and position it for the future.

As importantly, a key automotive industry customer had made EDI, a web-based customer portal and advanced shipping notice non-negotiable requirements. Calico took action because it recognized the importance of EDI to the Tier One and Tier Two automotive suppliers who work with top automakers such as Ford, General Motors and Chrysler, so we took action.

When assessing ERPs, the Calico team paid particular attention to their ability to pull and manage real-time production data, including machine downtime, scrap material and inventory in addition to advanced shipping notice, EDI capabilities and web-based customer portals.

I love the fact that CyFrame pulls the data into reports that tell us if we’re profitable and by how much and can help us identify and troubleshoot problems,”

says Shannon. “Initially, we ran CyFrame’s accounting system in conjunction with our legacy system because of the significant differences between the two sets of data. When we realized the variations were a result of inaccuracies in our legacy system, we



identified and resolved the issues then fully committed to CyFrame.”

CyFrame’s ERP demands (forces) Calico’s managers and employees to consistently use standard processes and procedures around specific tasks such as the generation of part numbers.

As well, CyFrame’s ERP automatically populates and generates the many forms demanded by the Tier One and Tier Two auto suppliers, all of which had previously been created by production floor operators with supervisors overseeing the process and checking the forms.

“Now that CyFrame has taken on these tasks, our employees are free to handle more value-added tasks – so we’re using our people more efficiently and effectively but as importantly, the production floor is much happier” says Shannon.

“Until CyFrame’s ERP took over the production scheduling, our scheduler was working weekends to get it done,” says Shannon.

As a result of CyFrame, we no longer need to hire a dedicated scheduler and the employee who handles it now gets weekends off.

Calico also needed to improve the inventory management process with minimum and maximum levels set to ensure dynamic stock targets were maintained. Real-time bar coding and label printing were considered crucial. They looked closely at the different profiles and dashboards as well as the standard and customizable reports to identify the best fit.

Plastics companies that are looking to implement an ERP system must be clear about what they need from it before starting the review and selection process. However, once that process is underway, it’s likely they’ll discover new and possibly unexpected capabilities as they get to know the ERPs and their providers.

As Calico management now know, the best providers really are the



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“The more we use the ERP, the better we’ll be able to manage our business,” says Teresa Gooding, purchasing manager at Calico. “For instance, scrap volume data can tell us whether a machine needs attention or we need to hire more operators.”

subject matter experts, so when they say, “This feature can help you do this...”, it’s worth keeping an open-mind. In a number of instances, CyFrame staff highlighted certain capabilities and reports that managers then shared with other Calico team members.

“If I can see the possibilities and opportunities, chances are everyone at Calico will be able to put the capabilities and reports to good use,” says Teresa Gooding, purchasing manager, Calico. “A fresh perspective or different reporting format can make it easier to find, see, absorb and even interpret certain data and information.”

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The ERP system has helped Calico identify and prioritize issues, then develop and implement the most appropriate solutions. Already, access to realtime, accurate material and production costs has prompted an in-depth investigation into processes and pricing.

“The ERP helps us figure out where there is a cost-to-Calico and a price-to-customer disconnect and then why;”

says Gooding, who likes the fact she can export the ERP data to other formats and software such as Excel and Crystal.

Initially, employees were wary of the changes required by the new ERP although the CyFrame training sessions helped them master the most basic tasks early on. In just two to three weeks, even the employees who were the least computer literate became comfortable with the new ERP and its punch-screens.

“Three-quarters of our workforce is in production where



they need to use the ERP constantly throughout their shifts,” says Gooding. “Of course, the more frequently they perform a particular ERP task or function, the easier it gets and the more they use the ERP, the more they see that it saves them time and effort.”

Gooding, who knows she learns best by doing, developed a real appreciation for CyFrame’s TestWorld function, which essentially duplicates Calico’s entire ERP system in a separate environment.

“Thanks to TestWorld, I was able to try all sorts of things and play around in the ERP to see what worked and what didn’t without worrying that my actions might compromise the data or functionality in our real-world ERP,” says Gooding, who spent up to five hours a week in TestWorld during Calico’s first few months with CyFrame but now visits TestWorld only when trying to learn a new way of doing something to help out a colleague.

About CyFrame

Since 1987, CyFrame has become the leading international provider of best-of-breed ERP web-based software solutions created specifically for small- to medium-size plastics manufacturers. CyFrame is uniquely positioned to meet the needs of plastics firms because it offers ERP systems that handle both stock and custom product and have been developed specially for injection and blow-molding, profile and sheet extrusion with thermoforming, and blown film and converting manufacturers. The company also offers integrated financial modules, e-commerce capabilities and secure customer account/profile areas. Onsite training, implementation and support services are offered as part of all CyFrame’s ERP solutions.

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