

Business Solutions for Companies Worldwide

Case Study: Morphy Richards

morphy richards Based in South Yorkshire, Morphy Richards spans a

20 acre site incorporating the head office along with the main UK distribution centre. Employing around 300 people with a turnover in excess of £95 million the company designs, manufactures and delivers a broad range of small domestic appliances. Today more households in the UK have a Morphy Richards product than any of its competitors from the renowned iron, kettle, toaster, to floor care, audio & visual and hair care.

Today Morphy Richards UK office is focussed on product design and development with most manufacturing sourced from a variety of suppliers in the Far East. To facilitate management of this supply chain Morphy Richards has a Hong Kong office liaising locally with suppliers.

Over the past 18 months Morphy Richards has evaluated and introduced new business processes to meet the challenge to excel in innovation along with reducing product to market lead times. As a result the company has introduced a new company structure focussed around category teams. Each category team is made up of sales, marketing, design, and engineering personnel who are responsible for many products from design to concept to delivery.

The Challenge

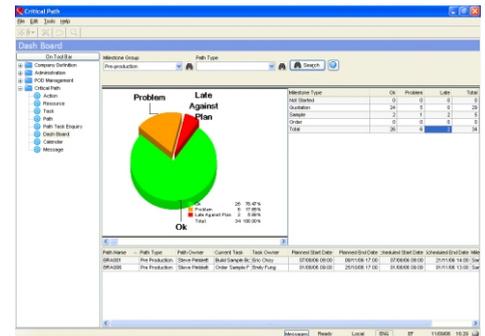
The NPD (New Product Development) process begins with a problem or an opportunity; ideas are captured, an idea then becomes a concept which when approved becomes a project. At this stage the team works with suppliers mainly in the Far East to produce samples which finally become a finished product.

Trevor Burrows, IT & Supply Chain Director comments *'To bring a new product to market can take various people, across different time zones a few months dependent on the complexity of the product. Individuals all have their own method of managing information with information spanning formats such as emails, various forms, spreadsheets etc. The process was not formal or structured enough to support the business process*

changes identified and we recognised that there was a need for a formal, corporate system.'

The Search

'To review our options a multi-disciplined team was set-up, this consisted of IT, engineering, design, and sourcing personnel. As a team we reviewed



The dashboard view

several PLM offerings which were all very powerful. Although we required a corporate system it needed to be simple and easy to use. Some of the powerful PLM systems we reviewed had been predominately developed for the automotive or aerospace sectors. Therefore rich in functionality but there is a difference between managing the development of an airbus to a toaster! We knew that the solution we selected would be used by a high number of people therefore it had to be very easy to use.'

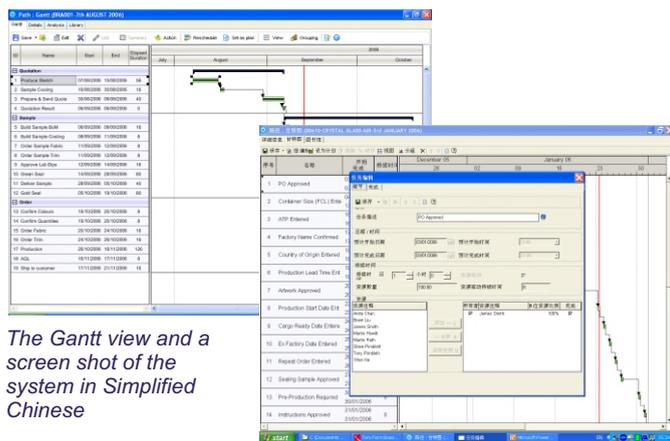
Morphy Richards core IT system is the ERP solution System 21 from Infor (formerly Geac) running on the IBM iSeries. Trevor explains why this was also an important factor in the search for a solution, *'At the same time as looking for a solution to meet the new product development challenge, as an IT department we were also looking for a way to move forward with application modernisation. We have existing in-house RPG skills and were looking for ways to develop these to adopt a modernised approach to our application development. I already knew about the LANSAs development tools so I got in touch with them.'*

'During our dealings with LANSAs they became aware of our requirements for a NPD system and soon introduced us to their business partner Datel, who had already developed something similar.'

'Although Datel are focussed on developing and delivering solutions to the clothing and footwear industry the Critical

'With greater visibility we now have a better understanding of why things get delayed. CPM has underpinned a fundamental change in our business process.' Trevor Burrows, IT & Supply Chain Director, Morphy Richards

Path Management solution had been designed to aid the management of a complex supply chain. The challenges of managing the supply chain for us as a domestic appliance company with design in the UK whilst sourcing production overseas are very similar to those faced by some clothing companies' 'Datel demonstrated the Critical Path Management solution and instantly we could see how it could meet our needs. The system was already 65% there with the potential to meet 95% of our needs quickly. We worked with Datel to specify and design the additional functionality, much of which now forms part of the standard package.'



The Gantt view and a screen shot of the system in Simplified Chinese

The Solution

Datel Critical Path Management is a powerful interactive event and task management system. The system aligns the correct resources to a process; monitoring progress and performance throughout, problems are identified enabling corrective action.

After the initial roll out of the system Morphy Richards have around 50 users utilising CPM including the category teams, purchasing, scheduling, management and directors. The directors are not only evaluating progress they are also part of the project process. For example at certain stages of the NPD a director needs to give authorisation, this is now completed electronic as part of the critical path.

One of the developments was the Dashboard. The dashboard provides a management view across all critical paths. The chart presents the number of paths ahead of plan, behind plan, on plan with drill down to the individual critical path. As Morphy Richards operates in category teams the dashboard gives a view as a business and by category team. Trevor explains. *'In line with the Dashboard the calendar function is pivotal. When an individual logs on the calendar provides them with a task list by day, week, and month. This enables them to become proactive and manage their time. We see the calendar as an individual's dashboard.'*

Our goal is to get the users to use CPM regularly; every day. It needs to become second nature, almost like processing your email. What is the first thing anyone does when they arrive at work open email; we have a strap line 'NPD everyday'. We feel this is achievable as the Datel CPM solution's fundamental design flavour is that it is as easy to use as email.'

The Benefits

'The business motivator to look for an IT system was to support the NPD process. We needed to shorten lead times through the organisation, as well as gaining control and visibility of this process. Datel's CPM solution has provided us with a view over all critical paths. We have the ability to see a summary of what is late and then drill down to pinpoint the problem so corrective action can be taken. With greater visibility we now have a better understanding of why things get delayed. CPM has underpinned a fundamental change in our business process.'

'One of the deciding factors in selecting Datel's CPM was the existing web capabilities in the tools used to develop the solution. Trevor explains, 'Going forward we want our engineering team and then suppliers to have access via the internet becoming an integral part of our new product development process. Therefore Datel's web development plans for the solution complemented our future roll-out plans.'

'Our IT strategy is to continue to develop around the critical path software developing complementary systems. The LANSAs and Datel framework provides us with the logic to rapidly begin our internal developments and deployments.'

The Future

'Currently we have around 50 users on the system and as we are still rolling out the solution we see this number growing. We have on average 90 tasks to each critical path and some of these are big tasks, being a mini project in themselves; for example packaging can consist of many steps. Going forward we will consider using the sub-tasks facility to obtain even greater control of the business processes'

'Morphy Richards is traditionally a UK company. As part of our future growth plans we are looking to grow our global markets. With this growth our new product development process will become more dispersed resulting in the critical path software being even more vital to ensuring control and visibility. The solution is already truly multi-lingual enabling us to roll out the solution in line with our planned growth.'