



PSL DATATRACK AND ANR: TWO DECADES IN PARTNERSHIP

ANR Manufacturing Ltd is a specialist subcontractor for both the electronics and engineering industries. The company has now relied on PSL Datatrack production control software for almost 20 years to ensure careful monitoring and control of every project. Benefitting from the modular structure of PSL Datatrack, ANR has been able to gradually invest in the software over the years as part of their continuous improvement policy and now run a much larger system than was purchased at the outset.

With ISO 9001:2015 accreditation, ANR provides its subcontract services to a wide range of OEM and Blue-Chip customers, many of whom have been clients for a vast number of years and are a testament to the level of service provided by the company. The challenge has been to provide a continuous level of high product quality, traceability, on-time deliveries and service to all customers from sectors as diverse as the broadcasting, automotive, security, medical, semiconductor, sport and entertainment industries.

The company operate out of a split-level factory in Bourne End, Buckinghamshire. On the ground floor, a modern machine shop equipped with high precision CNC multi-axis machines offers precision milling and turning capabilities. On the second floor, the electronics division offers PCB assemblies, cable assemblies and full turnkey box builds. This electronics work makes up 65% of what ANR do.



ANR's initial investment in PSL Datatrack was a result of the recognition that it needed to address the administration associated with the purchase of materials and components needed for the manufacture of its vast range of assembly types. The company appreciated that PSL Datatrack's controls were logical and strategic to their business requirements. Ease of interface and control of quotes, times and schedules, as well as development into status boards and charts, has since given ANR the flexibility to understand (in real time) all business demands.

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With over 27,000 material stock records, PSL Datatrack controls demand, purchasing and allocation to invoice. Information covering bills of materials (BOMs) and the generation of Quotations, Works Orders, Purchase Orders, Goods Received Notes (GRNs), Inspection Reports, Bar Code Identification, Delivery Notes and Invoices are all managed. Important revision controls are maintained and routed through PSL Datatrack, ensuring all correct information is available to authorised users.

The BOM module is key to ANR. They take the data the customer provides them with (the materials they require) and convert it into PSL Datatrack part numbers, meaning if a customer wants to change a quantity, or even the specification of a part, ANR have complete control. It also gives the company the ability to check if parts are used on any other customer equipment and ANR can then proactively advise them that there are changes. This allows them to create BOMs with which to quote customers and if successful, these transfer to purchasing.



Purchasing is a crucial element at ANR. PSL Datatrack allows them to run reports and status boards for any parts they need, be it for a minimum stock level requirement or for a specific project at any given time. Pricing is also crucial, as discrepancies could lead to big losses on jobs. Purchasers need to ensure that the price of materials on purchase orders match prices on quotes. “We wouldn’t be able to run without PSL Datatrack,” says Dan Avery, Materials Controller.

Without PSL Datatrack, managing the production of printed circuit boards (PCBs) would be a logistical nightmare but the job cards produced from quotations are a great help. These detail the process and all

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of the materials that go into the assemblies. PSL Datatrack ensures the quote is right, meaning data can be reused/copied throughout the rest of the process and minimise the company's administration times. "With our wide range of requirements, from simple single-material components with in-depth processes through to 1000-line bills of materials, PSL Datatrack controls everything from enquiry through to invoice," comments Nick Wilson, ANR's Managing Director.

Measurement of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) provides real time information, improving performance and ensuring both product quality and on time delivery. This data is visibly demonstrated on dynamic status boards around the factory, allowing shop floor staff to successfully complete works order operations in and on time.

ANR also have changing key business information displayed on status boards in the management office, so data is always at the fingertips of the company's Directors. At a glance it is clear to see what the order book is, what the next few months are looking like and also Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tasks that staff members are currently working on. PSL Datatrack and ANR work closely to develop these tailored solutions. "PSL Datatrack offers us fantastic control, live and real time information whilst supported by financial and profitability reporting for our needs," continues Nick.

ANR's continued investment in PSL Datatrack includes more status boards and bespoke reports whilst continually working on efficiency gains in data entry and processing. This includes a status board at a Shop Floor Data Collection (SFDC) point, with colouring (bespoke to ANR) indicating different statuses, such as time spent, time remaining and non-productive time. This is all key to making sure the shop floor is as efficient as possible.



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“We need to ensure that communication is the focus for all in production, logistics and the management teams,” says Mike Garside, Operations Director at ANR. “We are looking to further develop real time status boards, active work-to screens and acceleration of the processing of data, whether data entry or reporting. We need to ensure that the investment in plant is backed up by data flow and analysis and more dynamic ‘work-to’ information will reduce all downtime between operations. These are benefits for our customers and staff alike,” adds Mike.

For ANR, further benefits of PSL Datatrack are the facility to monitor and report on performance throughout the chain from suppliers to production through to operational roles, measuring waiting and takt time and capacity/utilisation reports.

“ANR and PSL Datatrack have been working together for a long time but we’ve really appreciated in the last 6 or 7 years the true benefits the system can give us,” concludes Nick. “We will continue to invest, diversify and add services to our business including test & measurement, lights out – 24hour manufacturing – for the engineering division but considering all investments, the effectiveness and measurement of our business wouldn’t be possible without the use of and confidence in PSL Datatrack.”