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The exact tool stock

THERE ARE BY NOW VERY EFFICIENT ALTERNATIVES THAT ENABLE TO MANAGE A TOOL STOCK AND TO PROVIDE A SECURED ACCESS TO THE DIFFERENT ITEMS. COST BENEFITS ARE BOTH DIRECT AND INDIRECT, AND AFFECTING SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE COMPANY. A HIGHLY PROFITABLE INVESTMENT THAT EVERYONE SHOULD GET TO KNOW.

In only seven years of time

Company In'tech Médical (T.20315) was founded in 1999. From its beginnings, the company specializes in manufacturing orthopaedic surgical instruments, mainly aimed at the rachis (backbone). These "tools", which are part of the ancillaries of the surgeons, exist in standard or in special, innovative, versions. For these 2 product lines, the company acts as a subcontractor, the design being carried out by the ordering party. With a staff of 17 people, In'tech Médical has immediately started its activities according to drawings provided by national and international customers, one American customer making out 80% of company's sales figure. The machine shop has always included CNC machines and the whole production has always been carried out in the subsidiary of the Pas-de-Calais, in the North of France. Machined materials are mainly stainless steels as well as titanium.

Nowadays, In'tech Médical covers 4 500 m² next to Le Touquet with 140 employees, plus 20 in MDP, In'tech's subsidiary in Haute Savoie and 20 more in a manufacturing unit in the USA. Huge investments have been made for machine tools and metrology, the latter activity making out 10% of the staff. Production is being carried out in 3 shifts, 33 people work on polishing stations. Moreover, the market has changed, and the manufacturer now offers his own throw-away products, in plastic, which he designs and produces.

Everything is in the drawer

Since 2003, In'tech Médical has built a partnership with **Iscar (T.02633), member of the IMC Group**, concerning the cutting tools. M. Bertrand Balavoine, in charge of the investments, explains: *"Iscar offers competitive and quality tools. The carbide manufacturer has a highly capable marketing team who knows how to promote its products, salespeople who are listening to our needs and application engineers who can validate in the machine shop the performances that have been promised."* During the first 6 years of In'tech Médical, the tools were put away manually in drawers with hand written stickers on their front sides. Although the management of the tools was carried out by a computer system, the non secured access to the tools allowed everyone to help himself to his needs; this brought about a huge stock, wasting and high costs. At this time, in 2005, M. Olivier Ruiz, in charge of the French market for the **CTMS - IMC group products**, suggested in a partnership the automatic tool dispenser **"Matrix"**. Discussions took place, aiming at improving the planning and reducing the costs caused by the tool stock and the related paper-work. One must know that at this time M. Bertrand Balavoine spent 45 minutes per day just to register the inserts flows into the computer. The project began with the definition of the required space for the items, the optimisation of the useful

references and the deletion of some useless tools; all this strongly assisted by the supplier. As the proposal matched with the need, 2 CTMS "Matrix" automatic tool dispensers with secured entry and their operating system Manage™ were installed in the machine shop in 2006.

Versatile and re-configurable

Matrix appears like a compact cabinet capable of managing a total of 882 bins, i.e. 882 different items. These bins with a locked cover are lain down in drawers that are locked as well, the specific entries being electronically run by the operating system. The bins and drawers can have a great variety in size and configuration, which enables the user to store tool-holders, solid tools, inserts and others items. The concept is based on versatility with the possibility to add or withdraw drawers and to connect by a simple click further cabinets. Thereby, the device can conform to the needs as they evolve with the company's business. Concerning the Manage™ software's functionalities, one can underline the stock management and automatic ordering, complete traceability and cost centre history, consumption management, the management of tool wear and successive regrindings as well as the editing of many detailed reports.

To try it is to adopt it

For In'tech Medical, the selected configuration has 1505 bins distributed in 18 drawers, with one master and one additional unit. 12 people, users and administrators have received a specific training for the product, and now, for M. Bertrand Balavoine, time has come for the first balance. *"As far as I am concerned, I have spared 10% of my working time, the stock has already been reduced by 5%, its turnover is dealt precisely and the flow statements are instantaneous. I have to add that the operators very quickly adapted themselves to this new working method"*. According to the info gathered by M. Olivier Ruiz, the savings generated by Matrix can be assigned onto 6 main activities:

- Physical item management cost / year: 50 - 500 €
- Storage costs per tool location / year: 30 - 125 €
- Purchasing / invoicing cost / year: 150 €
- Tool seeking / issuing cost / year: 20% of machine time
- Inventory costs reduction: 30%
- Tool consumption reduction: 5 - 30%
- Tool inventory savings: onto 30%

This is quite enough to justify the investment ...

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ISCAR1.JPG : M. BERTRAND BALAVOINE, PURCHASE MANAGER AT IN'TECH MÉDICAL, IN FRONT OF THE DESK OF HIS AUTOMATIC TOOL DISPENSER "MATRIX" FROM CTMS- IMC GROUP. THIS DEVICE BROUGHT ALONG MANY ADVANTAGES, BOTH DIRECT AND INDIRECT, AND AFFECTING SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE COMPANY.

ISCAR2.JPG : SELECTION OF DIFFERENT PRODUCTS MANUFACTURED BY IN'TECH MÉDICAL COMPANY. THESE GOOD ARE MAINLY METALLIC SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS AIMED AT THE RACHIS (BACKBONE). THEY ARE MAINLY MANUFACTURED IN STAINLESS STEEL (PICTURE : CTMS).

ISCAR3.JPG : THE OLD CUTTING TOOLS STORING CABINETS WERE CUMBERSOME AND NOT ADAPTED. THERE WAS NEITHER STOCK MANAGEMENT SECURISATION, NOR ANY FLOW TRACEABILITY.

ISCAR4.JPG : THE ENTIRELY NEW MATRIX CABINETS ARE ALL RUN BY ONLY ONE TOUCHSCREEN. THEY PROVIDE A MAXIMUM OF SERVICE IN A MINIMUM OF VOLUME, THEIR MAIN ACHIEVEMENT BEING THE STOCK MANAGEMENT AND THE TRACEABILITY.

ISCAR5.JPG : THE MATRIX CABINETS' DRAWERS CAN BE CONFIGURED ACCORDING TO THE CUSTOMER'S NEEDS. ON THIS PICTURE, 98 SECURED BINS WITH FOAM PADS ARE AVAILABLE. THEIR OPENING IS MONITORED BY THE MANAGE™ OPERATING SYSTEM.