Press-Seal Gasket Corporation
Made2Manage® ERP

Made2Manage Helps Press-Seal Gasket Navigate Through the Construction Industry Environment

PRESS-SEAL GASKET CORPORATION

Rubber Pipe Gasket Manufacturer Gains Confidence in Production Rates and Unit Costs

Gaskets for Underground Construction

Press-Seal Gasket has manufactured and designed rubber pipe gaskets since 1954. With four high-capacity precision extrusion lines and 10 injection molding presses, Press-Seal supplies gaskets and flexible connectors for pipe, manholes, and storm water drainage and sanitary sewer systems. In recent years, the company has expanded to produce rubber-based products for rail, automotive, aerospace, and industrial customers, in addition to its traditional underground construction markets.

The company's in-house laboratory and engineering department, combined with the Top-Notch Tool division, offers customers economical, single-source access to the products and services they need to get the job done.

Construction Industry Challenges

In 2000, Press-Seal Gasket found themselves in a growing, but rapidly changing, market with increasing competition. Their existing business system resided on obsolete computer hardware. The applications no longer provided the level of support and analysis that the company needed to stay strong and manage an increasingly complex business. The biggest need was in the area of costing. Press-Seal Gasket had little data to support pricing and estimating decisions and therefore showed wide variances between what they thought they would earn on each job and the actual results. Bidding on new opportunities was, therefore, a particularly trying and risky proposition.

ROI at a Glance:

Made2Manage ERP helped Press-Seal Gasket, a designer and manufacturer of rubber pipe gaskets, survive and thrive. Specifically, Press-Seal Gasket has achieved the following results:

- Detailed costs that provide greater analysis and more accurate future quotes and estimates.

- Enhanced shop floor visibility enabling process improvements and cost reductions.

- Improved accuracy of shop floor reporting, which grants real-time progress tracking and better cost estimating.

- Contract pricing and tracking that provides labor savings and ensures accuracy.

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> ❝ **Made2Manage has been very important…to the survival of our business.** ❞
>
> — *Chris Slater*, IT Manager, Press-Seal Gasket

As Press-Seal Gasket started their search for a new system, one of the primary criteria was that the system had to be built on a SQL Server database. "The company understood the importance of the database," Press-Seal Gasket IT Manager Chris Slater recalled. "It's at the heart of the system. In order to get full value from the information, you have to be able to access it with standard, easy-to-use tools and be able to pull information into spreadsheets and ad-hoc reports easily and quickly. We felt that SQL Server was our best bet for being able to do that."

That one early decision greatly simplified the selection process. With a more limited range of products to consider, the Press-Seal team focused on functionality to support their business needs, particularly the ability to define and track costs at the product, customer, and order levels. Additional consideration was given to ease-of-use. From a list of four finalists, the choice was pared down to two and finally to the one solution that best fit their criteria: Made2Manage ERP.

After a six-month preparation process — consisting of planning the conversion, training future system users, and testing the system's capabilities and configuration — Press-Seal Gasket completed the conversion over one weekend, keying in beginning balances and open orders to start business anew on Monday morning. After running parallel for just a month or two, the old system was retired permanently, but retained on-site in case there was ever a need to retrieve historical information from old files.

Moving Forward With Eyes Wide Open

The company spent two years analyzing and adjusting standard costs to try to get better estimates. While the result was "tolerable," according to Slater, there was not a lot of confidence in the data and "tolerable" was not what they really needed. With Made2Manage in place, Press-Seal Gasket has been able to refine those costs and now has a good handle on production rates and unit costs, and can bid with a lot more confidence.

Since the start of the business downturn in 2007, Press-Seal Gasket has had to make some changes in their organization to lower costs and remain profitable. "Made2Manage has been very important to us," Slater says. "We know our true costs now. When we make a change and find new efficiencies, we know the full impact on our costs and we know how much we can lower prices and still remain profitable. Also, when a material cost increases, we can make an informed decision on whether we need to pass that higher cost on to the customer or whether we can afford to absorb it. This is all very important to the survival of our business. We could not have done it without Made2Manage."

Slater also credits Made2Manage for contributing to the aforementioned cost improvements. The clear view of production processes and how they perform on a daily basis has helped identify ways to speed up production and to simplify processes. Press-Seal Gasket uses the Made2Manage Shop Floor Manager (with terminals on the production floor) in place of the outmoded bar-code system they had before. "Shop Floor Manager provides direct and immediate feedback to the workers as they report their activities. It's easier for the workers to report and they've been able to eliminate reporting errors."

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Continuous Business Improvement

Press-Seal Gasket is so enthusiastic about Made2Manage that they routinely volunteer to be a beta test site for new releases. "We have been amazed by the improvements in the new releases," Slater says. "The new capabilities and the quality of the programs have been simply outstanding."

In the last release, for example, new contract pricing features have been a big help to the sales department. "We can setup custom pricing by item and customer and, as the orders come in, the system automatically prices them, accurately, without the user having to look up the contract, override the catalog price, etc. There's huge labor savings there and we know the order is priced right, every time."

Another big help is the CRM activity tracking feature. The system keeps track of every customer contact and action, including any calls, inquiries, site visit notes, collection activities and more. The user has a full view of all customer contacts and notes on one screen. It's easy for the user and helps provide great customer service.

"Made2Manage is at the core of everything we do," Slater says. "It tracks every part of our business and gives us the information we need to make decisions and resolve the challenges the market throws at us." Slater is particularly pleased with the cost-of-ownership of the system, too. "The ongoing costs for running Made2Manage are really very minor compared to the value we're getting from the system."

About Consona ERP

Consona Corporation is a worldwide leader in providing customer relationship management (CRM) and enterprise resource planning (ERP) software and services for companies of all sizes. Consona serves more than 4,500 customers worldwide and across a variety of industries.

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