

LEADING NORTH AMERICAN MACHINING SHOP USES PROTECTED FLOW MANUFACTURING TO SOLVE CRITICAL SCHEDULING CHALLENGES AND RAMP UP SALES



NORTHWOOD INDUSTRIES, INC.
Skilled Problem Solvers For The Precision Machining Industry

“With PFM, there’s no hiding time. We’re now shipping four days early on average for the year!”

– Kurt Miller, President of Northwood Industries

Situation

Ohio-based Northwood Industries uses state-of-the-art machining technologies to provide precision-machined component parts, mechanical assemblies, and engineering design services to manufacturing companies throughout North America, Europe, and Asia.

Only recently, Northwood Industries began to become a victim of their own success. They had the machining capability and staff to take on even the toughest orders. But when those challenging work orders reached 150, managing production became problematic. Orders were not released appropriately and customer promised deliveries were not being kept. With so many complex orders in the queue, there was a disconnect on the shop floor as to what should be worked on and when.

In short, they were in trouble.

Solution

After integrating the Protected Flow Manufacturing (PFM) solution from LillyWorks with their current ERP, Kurt Miller and his teams gained visibility in seeing the actual time being spent on jobs.

“People assume if you work 10 hours that you should be logged in on a task for 10 hours,” says Miller. “But some of that time is spent on cleanup and some of that time is spent on meeting about jobs. It’s not always apparent how much actual time is spent on jobs or how long each job waited to be worked on.”

PFM provided Miller and his teams real-time information as to what to work on next at each resource. The Predictor, a predictive analytics tool within PFM, shows future constraints and gives suggested action to manage and maximize their workflow.

With PFM in place, overages were greatly reduced. Orders were released appropriately—not too early yet not too late—and in turn shipments were made earlier.

“With PFM, there’s no hiding time. We’re now shipping four days early on average for the year!” says Miller.

Now, with about 130 work orders in the queue, Miller says his staff no is no longer stressed about the job volume.

“They’re now asking for more jobs to do,” says Miller. “They’re pressuring me to ramp up sales!”

Results

Miller and his staff are continuing to optimize the PFM system to find new ways to improve their workflows and maximize operations, to not only meet client expectations, but exceed them. Each Northwood Industries employee now fully understands and trusts the PFM methodology; they know what needs to be worked on next. Deliveries are being made as promised, and in some cases earlier than expected.

“There’s still more room for improvement,” says Miller. “But we just finished our second straight sales month of plus \$600,000, so I think we’re off to a great start!”

Miller says the goal is to hit \$7 million in sales. Thanks to PFM, that brass ring may not be so far away.



About Northwood Industries, Inc.

Based in Perrysburg, Ohio, Northwood Industries, Inc. is a modern precision manufacturing company. The company serves their customers by blending the talents of highly trained machinists with state-of-the-art computer aided design and machining technologies. They serve a number of industries including solar energy, automotive, plastics, food, and medical.

To learn more about Northwood Industries, visit their website at www.nwindustries.com.

About PFM and LillyWorks

Protected Flow Manufacturing (PFM) from LillyWorks is helping manufacturers like Northwood Industries take control of their production schedules.

PFM continually directs production priorities to minimize wait times and maximize on-time delivery.

Make Commitments to Your Customers with Confidence

Visit the LillyWorks website to learn how Protected Flow Manufacturing can help you stop worrying about protecting your commitments and start delivering on time, in less time, every time.

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