

RF Logic Limited was formed in 1992 to design, develop and manufacture a range of test instruments for the radio communications industry. During the 90's RF Logic started designing and manufacturing products for external businesses. Many products have been successfully developed for clients in the audio, RF, industrial and military industries. The expansion due to design and build has proved very successful but changed the needs of the business.

Andrew Cornall, Managing Director of RF Logic Ltd., explains:-

"Prior to implementing e-maCs we managed with a number of systems designed in house. Whilst the functionality of these packages was adequate, e-maCs allows greater control of product inventory for our own stock and the free issue stock issued by some of our customers."

"Over the last couple of years, our growth has accelerated to the point that we would be unable to cope without using e-maCs to handle the critical functions. Without improved controls in place, we simply could not sustain the growth. The important point was to implement a software system that could keep full control within the business."

The e-maCs installation and implementation over the last 12 months has been a closely worked liaison between Surestead Solutions and RF Logic. A partnership based on trust and proven ability allows a free flow of information between the companies creating an installation fine tuned to the needs of RF Logic. The experience of RF Logic in areas such as purchasing has proved to be useful with a substantial growth period and a move to volume manufacturing for certain items but still retaining the more traditional specialist skills for lower quantities in manufacturing. Andrew expands the point.

"We have always designed and manufactured a diverse range of products for many different industries, but with increasing number of products and increasing volumes, the importance of manufacturing control increases accordingly. So far we have only been using 70% of the capability of e-maCs and have made substantial gains in component procurement efficiency and by using the MRC or job card system we expect to make substantial gains in that area".

RF Logic chose to implement e-maCs in stages: Purchasing and Stock Control initially followed by Manufacturing at a later date. It was felt that the greater gains would be made by tightening up the buying routines when provisioning for jobs. These gains were made by combining the purchasing requirements of several smaller jobs and when issuing stock to sub contractors. Instead of issuing separate reels of 5000 surface mount components when smaller quantities were required, a single reel to match the total needed, proving beneficial to both RF Logic and the sub contractor.

"The benefit to us and our subcontractor has been substantial," Andrew explains. "We now supply the right components to the sub contractor at the right time to allow them to prepare themselves for setting up on pick and place machines with the minimum lead times. Expensive delays due to component shortages (every sub contractors nightmare) have been reduced to an almost negligible minimum. The sub contractor is now confident that they will get the parts and that the kit of components is correct and complete".

After a significant period of evaluation, Andrew and his business partner Chris Davies chose e-maCs as it represented a great value package that would expand with the needs of RF Logic. A prime requirement was the willingness of the systems designers at Surestead Solutions to work closely with Andrew and Chris to customise and develop the program to suit their requirements. "We didn't want an "off-the-shelf" product as they were seen as accounts packages with add-ons or products aimed at mechanical engineers talking the wrong language. Surestead Solutions have an enviable number of years of experience in manufacturing – most of which is in Electronics, so they do understand the problems we face" Explains Chris. "So while e-maCs is a young product, it does have the functions and key features that we were looking for. The guys at Surestead seemed technically knowledgeable about what we wanted. We asked ourselves "Can we trust this supplier with my business? We decided that the answer to that question was YES."

Issues such as support were dealt with an agreed support regime: concentrated support, both telephone and on site at implementation stage reducing as RF Logic became self sufficient with daily use. Subsequent training was dealt with as required.