SYSPRO

GLOBAL TALK

SYSPRO as a Robust Component of a

Corporate
SOLUTION

Tyree Embraces

SYSPRO as Cornerstone of
BUSINESS STRATEGY

THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF ERP

"We understand your operational business needs – it's what we do, it's what our solution does, and it's where we work. So when you're ready to optimize your organizational house, let us know. We'd love to help you transcend to the next level."

- Phil Duff, CEO, SYSPRO

THIS EDITION OF GLOBAL TALK LOOKS AT –

How customers have taken their organizations to the next level by implementing SYSPRO

The Ripple Effect of ERP
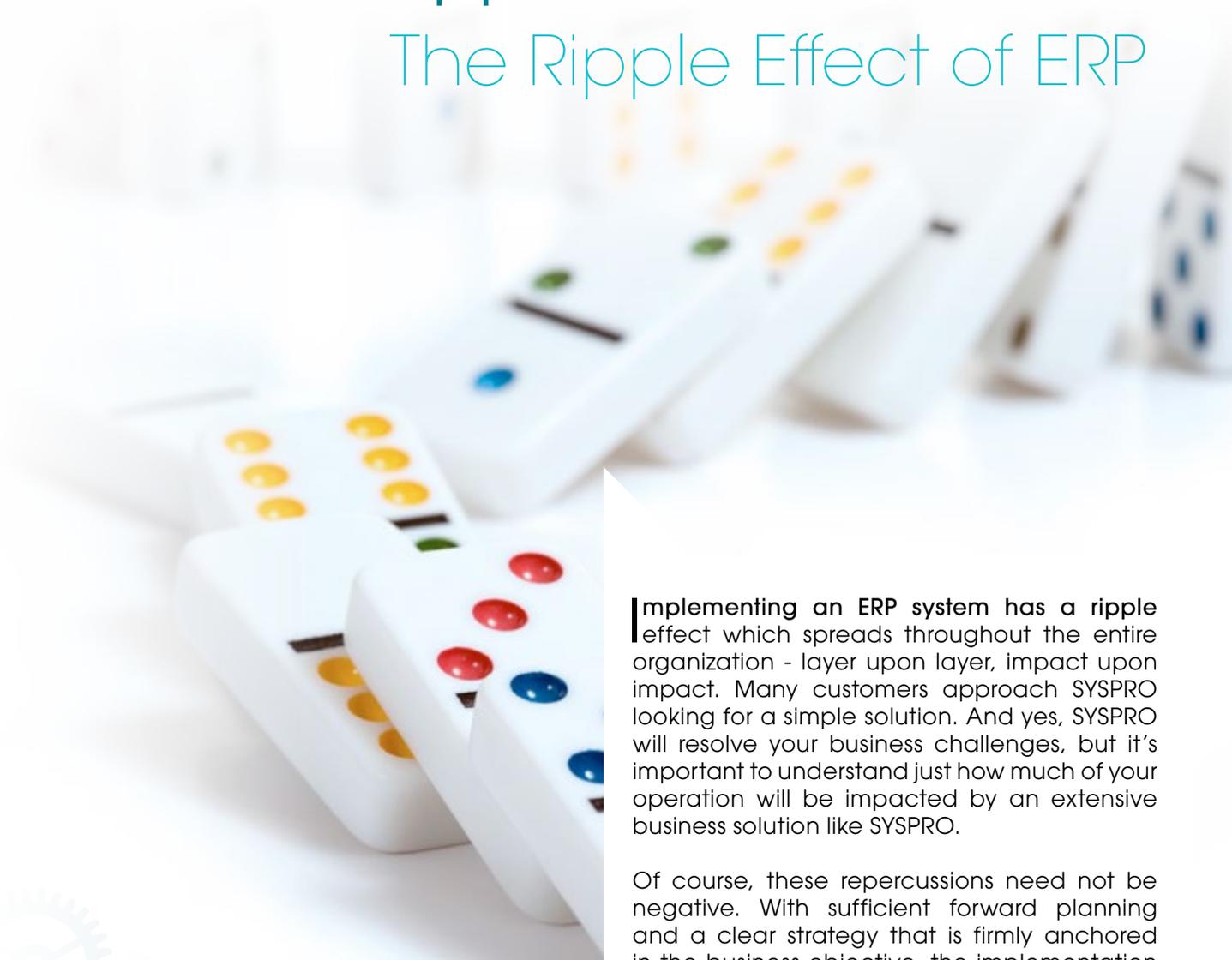
Implementing an ERP system has a ripple effect which spreads throughout the entire organization - layer upon layer, impact upon impact. Many customers approach SYSPRO looking for a simple solution. And yes, SYSPRO will resolve your business challenges, but it's important to understand just how much of your operation will be impacted by an extensive business solution like SYSPRO.

Of course, these repercussions need not be negative. With sufficient forward planning and a clear strategy that is firmly anchored in the business objective, the implementation of an ERP solution can transform a business. This edition of *Global Talk* carries several case studies which show how customers have taken their organizations to the next level by implementing SYSPRO.

> " More often, we are seeing SYSPRO providing a good fit for a two-tier ERP environment, delivering benefits to our customers through rapid return on investment, full access to information and low long-term maintenance cost. Implementation speed is another factor: SYSPRO comes out of the box, ready to go, with benefits being reaped within a year.
>
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Since our inception more than 35 years ago, SYSPRO has worked with many companies which have grown from a few users to hundreds of users. Even those customers who initially purchase SYSPRO to meet a single requirement often find that they can do so much more with a fully integrated solution. Typically, their use of SYSPRO and ability to optimize its functionality evolve over time until they have an excellent strategic fit with their business.

More often, we are seeing SYSPRO providing a good fit for a two-tier ERP environment, delivering benefits to our customers through rapid return on investment, full access to information and low long-term maintenance cost. Implementation speed is another factor: SYSPRO comes out of the box, ready to go, with benefits being reaped within a year.

For more insight into two-tier ERP, please read Dave Cavan's article in this issue entitled 'SYSPRO as a Robust Component of a Corporate Solution'. Dave explains that two-tier ERP is a growing trend due to the cost of rolling out and maintaining Tier 1 solutions, as well as the need for flexibility and locally-focused industry systems.

Also, SYSPRO has a strong tool set to meet evolving business processes and requirements, and the system's flexible configurability helps organizations to rapidly meet business needs as situations change.

Ultimately, we understand your operational business needs – it's what we do, it's what our solution does, and it's where we work. So when you're ready to optimize your organizational house, let us know. We'd love to help you transcend to the next level. ❖

Phil Duff, *CEO, SYSPRO*

SYSPRO as a
Robust Component
of a Corporate Solution – By Dave Cavan, SYSPRO Canada

SYSPRO has 35 years of experience in providing solutions to a broad range of customers – the majority of whom see themselves as manufacturing and distribution entities. Our solution is based on that capability and experience.

Along the way, we have worked with companies that have grown from a few users to hundreds of users. We have also been chosen to work as a component of an overall ERP strategy in a two-tier environment (more on that below). Today, over 15,000 companies worldwide use SYSPRO to manage their businesses – and we have the highest client-retention rates in the industry, including Tier 1 products such as SAP and Oracle.

This article discusses how SYSPRO provides a good fit for a two-tier ERP environment, benefiting our customers through rapid return on investment, full access to information and low long-term maintenance costs.
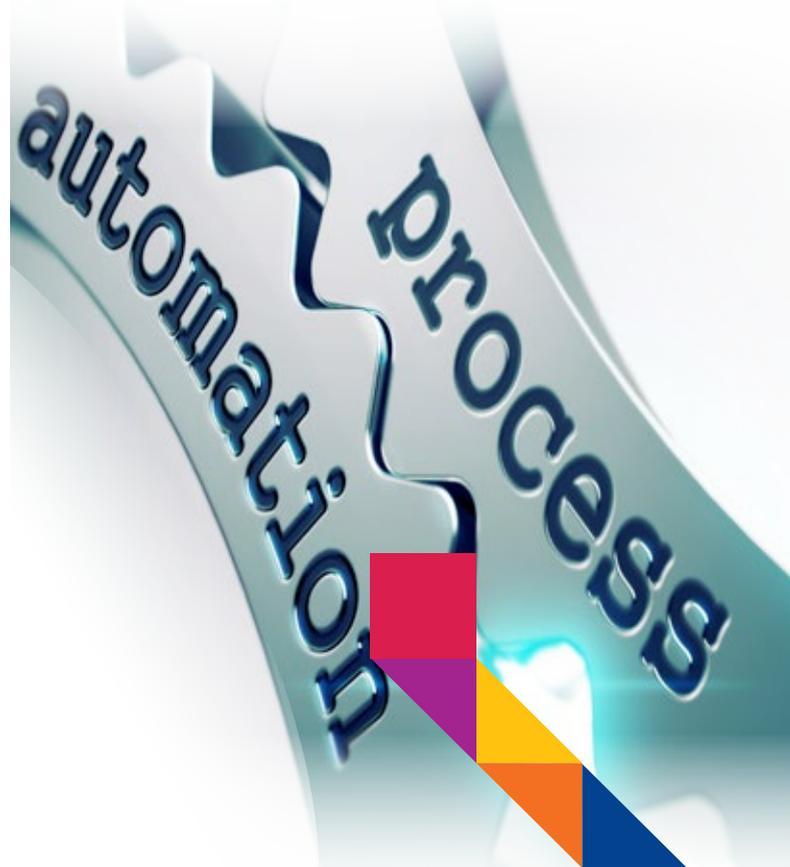
The key discussion points are:
- Two-Tier ERP is here to stay – it is a growing trend because of the cost of rolling out and maintaining Tier 1 solutions, and the need for locally-focused industry systems and flexibility.
- Cost is a major differentiator in this discussion – not just the initial cost which always favors the two-tier strategy, but the ongoing internal support, annual fees and cost of upgrades.
- Implementation speed cannot be matched by a Tier 1 solution. SYSPRO comes out of the box, ready to go, with benefits beginning to accrue within a year.
- Corporate data and business processes will be aligned, since SYSPRO has a strong tool set to merge business processes. The need to have data readily available from SYSPRO is met through various tools and integrations.
- The flexible configurability of SYSPRO enables the local company to rapidly meet its business needs as its situation changes, taking a load off of the corporate IT people while still providing the information required to run the corporation.
- We understand our customers' operational business needs because it's what we do, what our solution does and it's where we work.

SYSPRO as a Two-Tier Component in a SAP Environment

There is considerable written material available that discusses the concept of a two-tier ERP solution, including endorsements of the concept from industry behemoths Oracle and SAP. Tier 1 ERP solutions are embedded in corporations as systems of record, collecting and analyzing data from multiple internal and external sources. They often take years to implement, at a significant cost in dollars and resources, and in that implementation process these solutions become more and more rigid in how they, and the corporations they serve, will manage and use data.

This rigidity is characterized by industrial engineering consulting firm iPlan: "ERP systems are like cement: flexible at first, but rigid afterwards. Coming back to re-engineer business processes after the ERP implementation may require so many changes to ERP that you end up doing everything over again".

Two-tier ERP strategies are designed to support the concept of a single system of record while providing localized flexibility, lower cost of ownership and focused support for specific needs. This approach allows flexibility of design supporting a solution that matches the business processes of the local company at a positive price point and timeframe that meets the budget and expectations for these organizations.

Solutions such as SYSPRO provide out-of-the-box functionality that supports rapid deployment for manufacturing and distribution needs in small to medium-sized companies, while providing a full suite of integration tools to seamlessly move data to and from the corporate system of record.

Cost (TCO)

SYSPRO is a global player because we provide a cost-effective solution at a price point that Tier 1 products cannot match thanks to our long-term focus on industry-specific needs in the manufacturing and distribution sector.

The out-of-the-box business processes inherent in SYSPRO shorten the implementation timeline and are readily maintained since they are not customized for each environment. This focus does not reduce the capability of the SYSPRO solution. One SYSPRO plant in Canada did a study comparing what SYSPRO provided versus their parent company's SAP solution and found that the SAP solution brought no inherent advantage while dramatically increasing cost.

The cost of ownership is not just in the initial price, although that alone usually justifies SYSPRO for our clients. The long-term cost of maintaining a SAP environment is multiples of what it costs to manage a two-tier solution.

Implementation Speed – 'Time to Benefit'

Because SYSPRO comes out of the box ready to be implemented in a manufacturing and distribution environment, we often have companies up and running the basic functions within 90 days, and full manufacturing scheduling and MRP running within 180 days.

Time-to-benefit is a discussion we like to have with clients. If the customer is experiencing $1,000/day in lost revenue opportunities or cost disadvantage, a SYSPRO system can pay for itself in less than a year – and we have seen Tier 1 solutions take significantly longer, at a higher cost, returning no additional benefit.

SYSPRO as a
ROBUST Component
of a Corporate Solution

Seamless integration tools

In a two-tier ERP environment it is critical that the tools in both tiers provide the ability to easily move data, integrate business processes and provide integration touch points that can be trusted. SYSPRO has invested heavily in this area, and is recognized by Microsoft as a Gold Partner with access to key technologies to support our customers.

We recognize that there is often a need to integrate business processes across corporations, including purchasing, sales and financial reporting. SYSPRO comes from a world where that is a common requirement, and has the tools and delivery experience to support that need.

Flexibility of process change

SYSPRO has been designed to support business process change, with a unique architecture that separates data from business process - allowing clients to change what they do and how they do it on the fly without a significant IT effort to reconfigure the product.

This kind of flexibility and focus is required in local environments where business can change as the economy fluxes. It's much more difficult in a large centralized Tier 1 solution that is focused on corporate reporting and needs, and often leaves specific industry requests for enhancement and change on a long list of things that get done when time permits, not always when they are needed. This leads to the development of 'side-systems', spreadsheets and external databases that proliferate and are difficult to root out later when the changes are finally done and delivered.
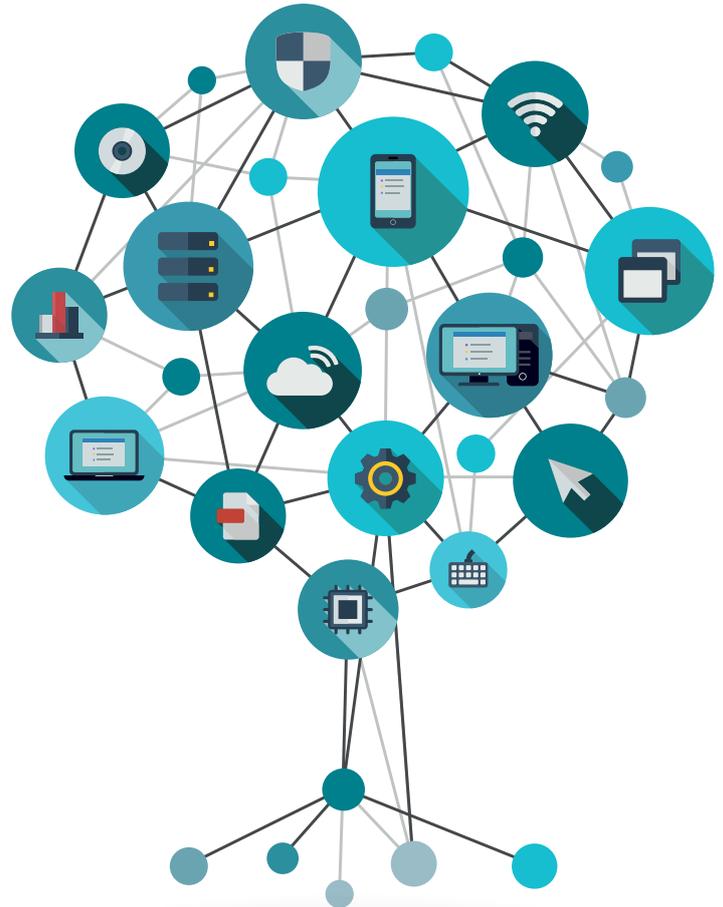
Maintenance and Upgradability

SYSPRO's architecture and method of deployment are designed to support two key concepts:

- We have always felt that it is important for the customer to be able to configure screen changes, layouts and reports (using Crystal Reports), set up their own new data elements, design and amend business process flows and create and maintain external documents. The reduced drag on corporate IT environments can be significant, while providing satisfaction at the user level.
- All the above changes are kept within the SYSPRO database, allowing easy and rapid upgrades. More than 87% of SYSPRO clients are on the current version of software because upgrades are usually done in a matter of hours, fully supporting the changes made by the client during the implementation. ❖

What if we told you that you could control your business...

... from right here?

SYSPRO™
Simplifying your Success

MetalTech: SYSPRO is a
Key Enabler of our GROWTH

> " SYSPRO has been a key enabler of our recent growth and we have never looked back since implementing the application.
>
> *- Paul Smith, Business Improvement Manager, MetalTech* "

Before implementing SYSPRO, the use of spreadsheets held the company back when it came to streamlining critical business processes.

Paul Smith, MetalTech's Business Improvement Manager, explains: "Previously we were running a number of spreadsheets which made it virtually impossible to generate any substantial reports and measure Key Performance Indicators across the business. With SYSPRO, we have been able to produce reports that are invaluable in measuring our financial performance, job performance, quote accuracy, market performance and sales activity."

MetalTech entered the ERP market six years ago seeking a solution that would enable it to measure performance, integrate with financial reporting software and support an ambitious growth plan. After extensive research, the company chose SYSPRO for its integration capabilities, scalability and reporting functionality.

Engineering and fabrication specialist MetalTech is saving an average of £200,000 a year after investing in a fully integrated SYSPRO ERP solution and slashing the time it saves on administrative duties by up to 40%.

The company offers a range of services including turning, milling, grinding, fabricating, welding, painting, assembly and testing. It has been using SYSPRO for six years and reported consecutive savings in both cost and time since replacing a manual reporting system.

Key Enabler
of our growth

SYSPRO was implemented into the business on time and on budget in a staged approach over three months. Since then, the solution has supported MetalTech's growth from a £5 million turnover firm to a £7 million company. MetalTech was also included in The Telegraph's list of the Top 1,000 growing companies in 2013. These achievements were made without adding any extra staff to the company's 90-strong team, because SYSPRO has been able to absorb the bulk of the extra work and resources required.

"SYSPRO has strongly supported our company growth over the past six years and become an integral part of all our operations. It was a big investment initially because we opted for an on-premise solution, but we more than recovered the initial costs associated with it in just two years of operating the system," Smith says.

Key to MetalTech's growth was its ability to evolve SYSPRO into a central, critical business application. Six months after the initial implementation, MetalTech's existing financials software was replaced with the relevant modules in the ERP system. K3 Syspro's human resource software, Equator HR, was integrated into the solution and has enabled the company to reduce its downtime by up to 10% over the past 24 months.

An Advanced Planning and Scheduling (APS) system was integrated into SYSPRO 18 months ago to collect job data from the factory floor. It has enabled the business to make further efficiency improvements and increase its on-time delivery rate from 80% to 90%.

MetalTech has upgraded its SYSPRO solution 10 times since the initial implementation, and each upgrade has been seamless and non-disruptive to the business. The company works with K3 Syspro's partner K3 Hosting to manage its SYSPRO set-up and ensure that it has data frequently backed up to the secure K3 cloud, hosted email and 3G access. This means that even if the company loses its Internet connection, its customers will not be affected. The company also benefits from SQL backup 10 times a day and is reassured that its critical business data is in the hands of professionals.

"We don't have the best comms line running through the business and our in-house IT expertise is limited, so it is reassuring to have K3 Hosting looking after our business data and providing infrastructure support. We also have access to K3's excellent support team and are still in contact with our account manager, who we speak to regularly. The fact that we just have one contact for all of our data needs means that we are free to get on with the day-to-day running of the business, reassured that our business information is always secure," Smith says.

MetalTech has been so impressed with its SYSPRO solution that it is assisting K3 Syspro with customer visits and welcoming other companies to its factory in Somerset to demonstrate how invaluable SYSPRO has become to its everyday operations.

"This was our first foray into the ERP market and we are delighted with the savings and efficiencies that SYSPRO has brought to MetalTech. It's not an exaggeration to say that SYSPRO has been a key enabler of our recent growth and we have never looked back since implementing the application. I am confident that SYSPRO will continue to play a major role as we diversify our business and grow our market presence even further in years to come," Smith says. ❖

Parallax **Looks to the Long Term** with SYSPRO
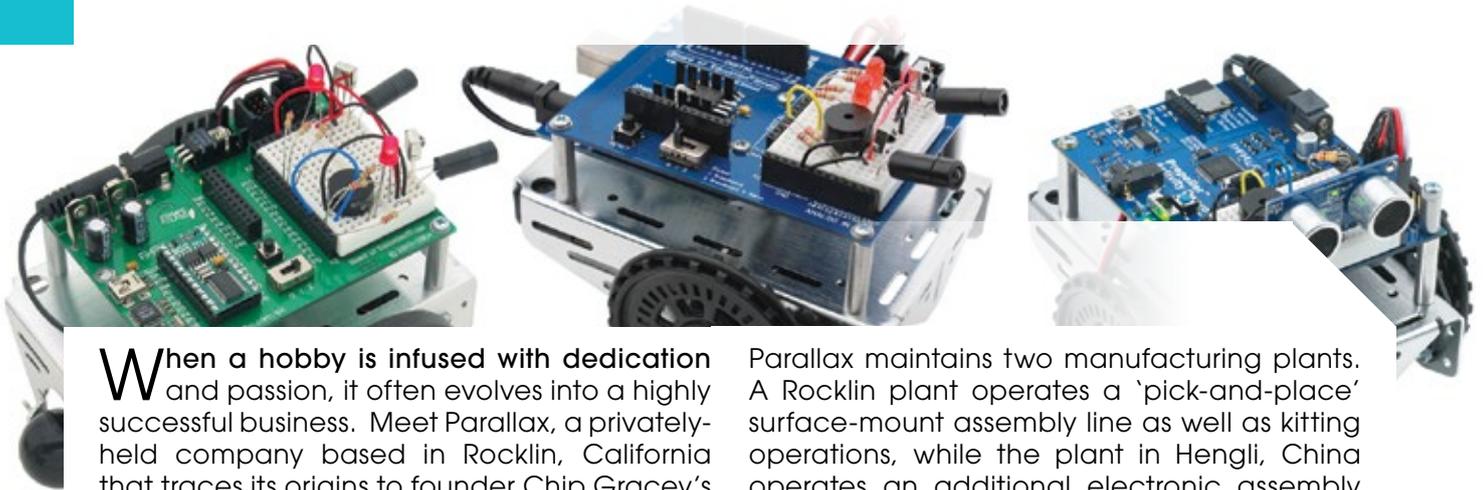
When a hobby is infused with dedication and passion, it often evolves into a highly successful business. Meet Parallax, a privately-held company based in Rocklin, California that traces its origins to founder Chip Gracey's teenage interests in programming and electronics.

Today, Parallax designs and manufactures microcontrollers, sensors and robotic components for hobby, educational and commercial use. Parallax's own microcontroller design, the multicore Propeller chip, as well as its line of sensor products, which measure humidity, light, color, proximity, vibration, location and infrared, are big sellers in the hobbyist and commercial markets. The educational market, which comprises about a third of the company's revenues, is a major customer of Parallax kits designed for microcontroller programming and robotics courses.

Parallax products can be purchased online and from mainstream electronic distributors such as Digi-Key and retail outlets, including RadioShack and Fry's, as well as 70 distributors around the world.

Ken Gracey, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Parallax, says: "Our products are designed to empower our customers, who are a creative problem-solving bunch. We document the products extensively with applications and code examples so our customers can quickly integrate our microcontrollers or sensors into a project or product design and speed their time to market."

Parallax maintains two manufacturing plants. A Rocklin plant operates a 'pick-and-place' surface-mount assembly line as well as kitting operations, while the plant in Hengli, China operates an additional electronic assembly line and chip testing operation.

With 120,000 individual customers, Parallax fills about 100 to 200 orders a day or approximately 3,500 a month.

Until the mid-1990's, Parallax had been running a low-end customer service program on a Mac. On reviewing its business needs, including manufacturing, distribution, sales, planning, purchasing and accounting, the company realized more comprehensive software was needed.

"After an extensive search, we hit on SYSPRO, an integrated package with all the right pieces. SYSPRO has evolved alongside Parallax and continues to give us the sophistication and customization capabilities we need to grow our business," Gracey says.

Parallax operates a typical three-tier installation, with SYSPRO on its own Windows® 2003 R2 application server. The SQL Server® 2005 database runs on a separate Windows 2003 R2 server, with all clients running Windows XP.

"While SYSPRO has improved our business, it's the MRP functionality that gets the most accolades inside our company. In fact, we've developed a chart showing the effects of a properly configured MRP, which has reduced total inventory by 16.1% since our initial efforts were put in place to configure it correctly," Gracey says.

"It was really interesting watching MRP 'come into compliance' as our Senior Buyer Karen Arneson and Inventory Manager Jennifer Fearn worked together to make sure all parameters were correct. We hired Shaun Hern from ERP Specialists to do some focus training. Shaun provided a number of examples and documents to get us headed in the right direction."

The MRP set-up requirements led to careful analysis of Parallax's manufacturing run times, operation and BOM (Bill of Materials) correctness and lead times for a variety of processes and parts: Made-in goods; Subcontracted; Kitted products; and Parts manufactured offshore. Together with requirements planning from a variety of warehouse demands, Parallax has a fairly complex system to manage. Once it was working correctly, however, the company was able to measure the effects of its choices.

"The use of MRP has made amazing improvements to our efficiency. Before we had MRP, we were frequently out of stock of key finished goods, yet overloaded with excess raw materials and the wrong finished goods," Gracey says. "Once we started putting MRP to work and our staff had been trained in their roles, we were able to reduce our inventory by about $350K. We are rarely out of stock of any product, and the live connection between SYSPRO and our web site allows us to display our inventory levels in real time on the web."

Parallax maintains five SYSPRO warehouses and three physical warehouses. The SYSPRO warehouses are arranged by the functions performed: Raw Materials; Finished Goods; RMA returns; China; Refurbished items sold via eBay; and Reworked items.

"This setup allows us very convenient use of MRP because we can omit certain warehouses from requirements planning and plan purchase order and job actions effectively by warehouse and/or location. We just put in the Estimated Buying Quantity and Manufactured Required Quantity, the buying role and the lead time. In this manner, we have automated the issuing of purchase orders, reducing the time to write and issue them from more than four days down to about two. Moreover, rather than having a central planning bureau, we've dispersed planning among our staff."

Parallax's IT Manager, Jim Ewald, established a Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) that automates online sales. Ewald wrote a .NET application that provides an interface between the company's ecommerce web site and SYSPRO.

The interface pushes product pricing, inventory and availability on the web. It also collects sales orders placed on the web site and creates the sales orders in SYSPRO. Customer accounts on the web and in SYSPRO are synchronized so that repeat orders can be attached to the correct SYSPRO customer account. The interface can also create new customer accounts as needed.

Once the orders are approved, they are simply printed as a packing list for the shippers. "The application interfaces to SYSPRO e.net Solutions business objects through SYSPRO Web Services. It is installed on the SYSPRO application server as a service," Ewald explains.

Gracey concludes by offering plaudits for SYSPRO's report output capability. "Having accurate data from sales, inventory, accounting and manufacturing allows us to quickly assess changes and trends," he says. ❖

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PARALLAX
www.parallax.com

Tyree Embraces SYSPRO as
Cornerstone of Business Strategy

Established in 1946, Tyree Transformers has become a brand associated with the manufacture of quality transformers. The company is part of the Tyree Group, which has manufacturing and distribution facilities in Australia and New Zealand. Each week, the company handles 473 purchase order line items and 1,317 manufactured items. Approximately 465 transformers are shipped from its Mittagong, New South Wales factory every month.

Founder Sir William Tyree instilled values of continued improvement and excellence. This culture continues to live on in the company, alongside partners such as SYSPRO that are able to add value and support its vision to always find 'a better way'.

Tyree CEO Keian Barnard says: "Tyree is always striving to be innovative to ensure we continue to provide our customers with value for money. IT systems are an integral part of our strategy and daily operations.

"The effective use of our ERP system is a key focus for us to meet our objectives for ongoing improvement and high efficiency. Tyree continues to integrate SYSPRO into everything we do as a business, and it's a cornerstone of our overall business strategy."

Early adopter
Tyree was an early adopter of quality management, securing accreditation for AS/NZS ISO 9001 in 1990, and constantly carries out in-house testing and development to enhance its products.

The company believes in investing in IT such as Computer Aided Design (CAD), ERP and web-enabled platforms to manage and improve its supply chain and customer service.

As customer orders grew, Tyree needed better visibility of its inventory and integration with its backend system to improve productivity as well as reduce the human errors associated with manual processes. Another push to move to a new solution was an urgent need to improve its reporting capabilities, as the previous system had limited reporting functionality.

" It's really about the diversity of SYSPRO and ability to mold it to our business needs. It's extremely flexible. You can customize the script completely and add more business processes to the current program.

- Bernice Crawford, Business Systems Developer, Tyree "

Cornerstone
of Business Strategy

In 2008, SYSPRO was brought in to replace an in-house application, and the implementation was completed on time and on budget.

The SYSPRO journey continues today, with Tyree expanding the solution to support its growth. Since then, Tyree has added several modules to its ERP system, including Office Automation, Reporting Services, General Ledger, Material Requirements Planning and Work in Progress.

SYSPRO has fulfilled all of the company's main objectives, resulting in improved reporting capabilities, fewer manual processes and enhanced data integrity. Bernice Crawford, Tyree's Business Systems Developer, says data visibility across the entire transformer business has improved, and key business processes have been automated.

"As a result, we have been able to extend the reporting, customize applications and stock-taking functions, and implement full GL integration from sub-ledgers to shop floor data collection and barcode-scan capability in receiving goods," Crawford says.

Upgrading to SYSPRO 6.1
Tyree upgraded from SYSPRO 6.0 SP2 to version 6.1, and deployed the Office Automation module as well as Bin Locations.

The system provides safety stock planning with the demand time fence rule to ensure safety stock is auto replenished within the lead time specified. Reports include 'safety stock pegging', enabling the company to better anticipate inventory requirements and reduce instances of over- or under-supply.

"It's a great help because MRP automatically suggests replenishment of safety stock to ensure sufficient inventory to fulfill order delivery dates," Crawford says.

Tyree developed its customized applications using SYSPRO e.net Solutions business objects, achieving significant time savings and improved productivity.

Business objects enable external or third-party applications to access data without compromising on data security and integrity set out by SYSPRO.

Custom-made for Tyree

"It's fantastic because we can use the business objects to mold and customize SYSPRO to meet our specific business processes. These include job creation by specific criteria such as product class, job classification and division as well as Work in Progress issues and receipt tracking using bar-coded job cards and bar-code scanners," Crawford says. "We can see the exact progress of a job at any point, so we can inform our customers as soon as the job is completed."

The company also implemented a third-party app, RiteSCAN, for purchase order receipts, stock-taking, inventory bin and warehouse transfers. It seamlessly integrates with SYSPRO business objects, enabling stock items to be tracked, booked into inventory timeously and put away into specific bin locations within the warehouse. Previously, these receipted goods were put away in the warehouse using any available space, making it difficult to find the stock when it was needed. Since switching on inventory bin locations, Tyree can easily locate items and this has provided better visibility across the supply chain and into the physical location of stocked items.

"We're now able to scan and capture stock quality and inventory through mobile devices and record the location of the stock stored within the warehouse," Crawford says. "The data is uploaded directly into SYSPRO, eliminating the need for double entry and improving inventory accuracy and operational efficiency."

Automating processes, improving job delivery

Tyree built various applications around its jobs and ordering process, including a subcontract loader which automatically creates purchase orders and links all associated Work in Progress (WIP) jobs. When deliveries are completed, the app automatically kit issues and receipts the WIP job. A pegging report was created which lists all components, including sub-job components within a SYSPRO WIP job, and pegs the supply (purchase order/job/quantity on hand) to the component. This ensures all job-related components are on order or on hand to avoid delays and ensure DIFOT (Delivery In Full On Time).

"The old system did not have a WIP module, so there was zero visibility into the progress of a customer order on the production floor," Crawford says. "Since upgrading to SYSPRO, we now have close to 100% visibility of where the job is on the factory floor, as each WIP job has a job traveler and is scanned (kit issued and receipted) at specific work centers on the production line. This enables our customer service team to provide our customers with an accurate update on the progress of their order, resulting in improved customer satisfaction."

Tyree implemented the Shop Clock module to track direct and indirect time spent on the shop floor. It allows the company to manage its labor capacity as well as compare actual hours versus estimate against WIP jobs, thereby improving future job costing estimates.

The EFT module was implemented to enable payments to be made electronically. Tyree previously had to print and process checks, then post them to suppliers. Invoices are also automatically sent via e-mail to customers as soon as they have been raised. These, too, used to be printed and sent via post.

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Optimizing benefits

To glean more benefits from its SYSPRO system, Tyree is in the process of implementing the Workflow module to streamline work processes for creating requisitions and Purchase Order approval. With the module implemented, e-mail alerts can be automatically sent to the authorizing manager if an order exceeds the authorized value. The manager can then electronically accept or reject the requisition order.

All authorizations are processed electronically via e-mail and approved requisitions are automatically converted into purchase orders for processing.

The company hopes to use the Engineering Change Control (ECC) module, which locks, tracks and records changes made to the Bill of Materials so that there is a proper audit trail.

Crawford is looking forward to upgrading to SYSPRO 7, and believes features such as active tiles, enhanced personalization and flow graph navigation will allow users to view overall specific business processes.

She adds that SYSPRO Espresso will offer significant business benefits for Tyree, enabling company executives to log into the system off-site and access critical data anytime, anywhere.

Elaborating on why SYSPRO has proven its worth, she says: "It's really about the diversity of SYSPRO and ability to mold it to our business needs. It's extremely flexible. You can customize the script completely and add more business processes to the current program."

And like most successful market leaders, Tyree constantly looks to technology solutions to seek new and better ways to ensure reliability and improve service. ❖

Primex *Optimizes SYSPRO for Growth* and
Competitive Advantage

SYSPRO's flexibility, user-friendliness and open architecture have directly enhanced plastic injection specialist Primex Manufacturing's ability to survive and grow in a competitive marketplace.

Headquartered in Langley, British Columbia, where the company maintains a manufacturing facility and two warehouses, Primex Manufacturing specializes in the design, engineering and fabrication of proprietary plastic injection products.

The company has a variety of offerings, including a comprehensive line of HVAC venting solutions, but the enclosures it makes for telecommunications companies such as Telus, Rogers, Bell, and Shaw are its most important product. In addition, Primex's business development team works with customers and prospective customers to find solutions to their needs and help them better service their customers. The development team also attempts to predict the plastics products that will be needed in the future.

Established in 1971, Primex works closely with telecom customers to design cabinet-style enclosures that house cable, networking wires and hardware, and provide protection from external factors such as rodents and weather.

Vickie Heese, Director of Finance for Primex, says: "Each enclosure design is built specifically to answer the needs of today's broadband installers. What sets us apart from the competition is our ability to design, customize, and deliver a top-quality product that meets every one of our customers' enclosure needs, whether it's for copper wire, modern fiber optics, modems or routers. The versatility of our products helps telecom and cable companies manage the transition to broadband with less cost and with greater flexibility and adaptability for future technologies."

Primex Manufacturing identified a need to share common data across the enterprise, and recognized that an Enterprise Resource Planning solution was the optimal way to expose and access information from all its mission-critical systems. The company's requirements called for a flexible, open architecture that would provide the agility to add, upgrade and swap components.

For the past 16 years, Primex has run its operations using SYSPRO software. The SYSPRO modules used by the company include General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Work in Progress, Inventory, Product Configurator, Bill of Materials, Sales Orders and Cash Book.

"One of the things we really like about SYSPRO is that it works with the other software we use to run our business. We find the interoperability of SYSPRO with Microsoft and other software to be very useful, especially when it comes to writing reports," Heese says.

> "SYSPRO's General Ledger module is really good at capturing the information we need to run the company, and without it we couldn't do our reporting. However, I prefer to create the reports themselves using Power Pivot, the data analysis tool in Microsoft® Excel®.
>
> *- Vickie Heese, Finance Director, Primex*
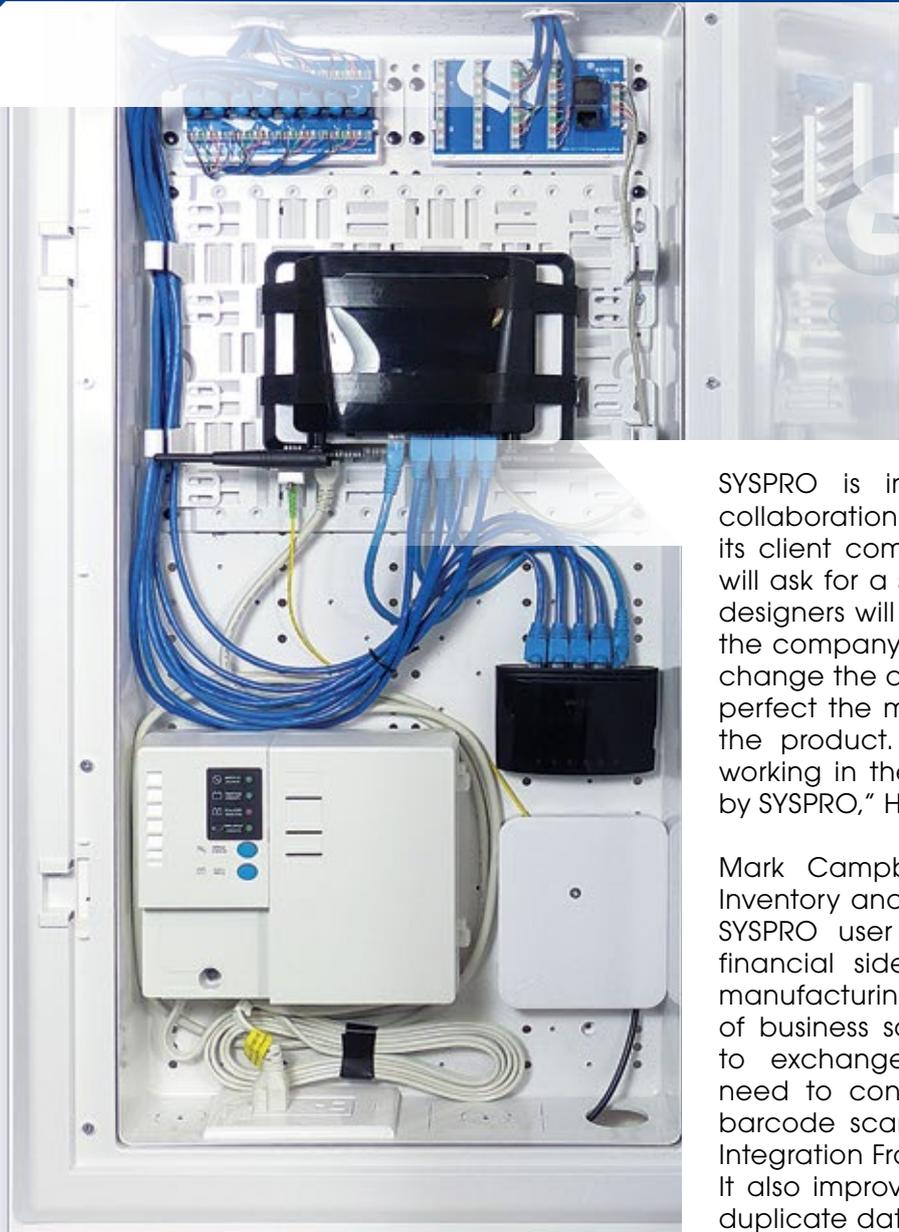
Optimizes SYSPRO for
Growth
and Competitive Advantage

SYSPRO is instrumental in facilitating the collaboration process between Primex and its client companies. "One of our customers will ask for a solution, and our engineers and designers will create a prototype, after which the company might say 'Great!' but ask us to change the design a bit. We work together to perfect the mold, and then we manufacture the product. All of this is made easier by working in the flexible environment provided by SYSPRO," Heese says.

Mark Campbell, Primex's Senior Manager: Inventory and Order Fulfillment, is the primary SYSPRO user in the company outside the financial side of the business. "Like many manufacturing companies, we use a variety of business software applications that need to exchange information," he says. "We need to connect external devices such as barcode scanners to our ERP, and SYSPRO's Integration Framework allows us to do all that. It also improves information sharing, reduces duplicate data entry and enables data to be stored in one place for consolidated reporting and analysis."

primex

According to Campbell, SYSPRO is the financial and operational backbone of Primex, but off that backbone the company runs a number of specific third-party solutions. "For example, we use Compuplus's ABC barcoding software, LabelView to design and manage our barcode labels, Microsoft Dynamics CRM, Excel Power Pivot, and Budget Maestro by Centage. We also have three access databases that were developed by students from BCIT as a summer project and which they continue to maintain. Thanks to SYSPRO e.net Solutions, we have all the company's information at our fingertips on a continuous basis, and we can use the software of our choice to access, feed, and mine our data."

SYSPRO e.net Solutions facilitates integration with other operating environments, including Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Office®, Microsoft SQL Server, UNIX and Linux. By utilizing a multi-platform software product, companies such as Primex gain scalability and flexibility, and are able to select the exact functions needed to increase operational control and efficiency.

Based on the Microsoft .NET Framework, SYSPRO e.net Solutions allows the integration of third-party software, external devices, business systems and cloud-based applications. For example, SYSPRO can be extended to integrate with external applications such as shipping companies' tracking systems. In addition, SYSPRO e.net Solutions facilitates the integration of SYSPRO with scanning and Smart technologies, streamlining picking and packing processes, as well as inventory stock takes.

Working through the SYSPRO e.net Solutions interface maintains the security and integrity of the core SYSPRO ERP system, while allowing external applications to safely access data. Furthermore, SYSPRO Office Integration allows users such as Heese to easily and securely access SYSPRO data through their favorite Microsoft Office products, even though SYSPRO may not be installed on the client machine.

"Rather than forcing us to design our business around inflexible procedures, SYSPRO allows us to use the tools we find most practical for running our business. In the final analysis, that's good for the company. It increases our ability to survive and grow in a competitive marketplace," Heese says. ❖

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>
> - *Vickie Heese, Finance Director, Primex* "

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