

TYPE
CASE
STUDY

INDUSTRY
METAL
STAMPING

LOCATION
THOMASTON,
CONNECTICUT

STEWART EFI IMPROVES OPERATIONS WITH CLOUD-BASED, REAL-TIME DATA

Plex MES modernizes and streamlines metal stamper's production across facilities.

COMPANY OVERVIEW

As one of the largest international suppliers of precision progressive die, deep drawn, and slide-formed metal stampings, Stewart EFI is well-known in the world of precision stamping specialists. Aiming for "perfection" in everything they do, the

Stewart EFI team works with a full range of capabilities from design to production and beyond. The company is headquartered in Thomaston, CT, with an additional facility in El Paso, TX and a joint venture in Hangzhou, China.



CHALLENGE

- Lack of digitization led to decreased reliability
- Limited integration of data across departments
- Increased inefficiencies and duplicative work



SOLUTION

- Plex Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
 - Plex Manufacturing Execution System (MES)
 - Plex Quality Management System (QMS)
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RESULTS

- Standardized processes across all departments
 - Improved confidence in data accuracy
 - Reduced time spent on manual data entry
 - Increased yields, inventory accuracy, and throughput
 - Increased efficiency by implementing improved workflows
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ADVANCEMENTS HALTED WITH OUTDATED SYSTEMS

With notable growth across the board and three manufacturing facilities, including a joint venture in Hangzhou, China, Stewart EFI had outgrown its legacy systems. The company was operating under multiples pieces of software; one legacy ERP system and another geared towards financial management on premise. Both solutions were becoming increasingly unsupportive, with limited opportunities for growth, minimal integration capabilities, and an overall lack of digitization.

The legacy ERP system was 28 years old and unable to integrate with third-party software, leaving the Stewart EFI team to fend for themselves in terms of technological advancement. So, while data integrity wasn't a pressing issue, the steady increase in inefficiencies and duplicative work due to Excel and paper-based tracking led the team to kick-off the hunt for a better equipped ERP system; one built to grow with them long term.



INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC SOLUTION NEEDED FOR GROWTH

The evaluation process began with Stewart EFI's CFO, Tony Russo, IT Director, Sam Yohannan, and a previous company president. The team sought out an industry-specific solution with proven success working alongside metal stamping and forming entities. Luckily, they had an opportunity to go on a Plex customer site visit, giving them the chance to see the solution in action.

“The Plex team, including pre-sales engineers and solution architects, acted more like consultants than salespeople – focused on finding the right solution, not just making a sale.”

SAM YOHANNAN
IT Director, Stewart EFI

Stewart EFI's Plex implementation began with a core team of users from every department, including production, finance, quality, and supply chain as well as full support from upper management.

Even during the initial planning phases, the team worked diligently to ensure that everyone was well-informed, conducting detailed workshops with Plex partner [Control+M Solutions](#). Having input from a trusted partner shaped how the team conducted training and configured Plex, helping to ensure that the system worked well for everyone. Phil Rejeski, a Stewart EFI business partner, also played a key role in the implementation.

Both the Plex implementation team and Control+M took a hands-on approach during go live, ensuring their availability both on-site and remotely to monitor progress and answer questions as needed. Additionally, Plex's cloud-based model eliminated the need for any upgrade management and security patching, reducing the time needed for implementation, as well as cost and complexity from the very beginning.



BETTER ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES, MORE VALUE

Plex ERP, inclusive of Plex MES and Plex QMS, was successfully implemented in 18 months following a May 2021 project start. The Stewart EFI team was eager and ready for improved processes, specifically those based in the cloud, making the transition seamless with little to no reluctance from employees. Now that those improvements have come to fruition, the team is more engaged than ever, with everyone working based on the same, real-time data. This has increased accuracy across the board, enforcing standardized processes and reducing redundancy.

By streamlining operations, time spent manually inputting data has been eliminated, allowing resources to be put towards tasks

that lead to greater value. Additionally, remote access to data through the Plex cloud has allowed Stewart EFI to make quick and informed decisions. The company's IT team has seen reduced downtime and costs, no longer needing to manage servers, updates, or backups internally.

Stewart EFI has also achieved complete traceability with Plex QMS, allowing the team to better track materials, components, and processes from suppliers to production to delivery. As a result, visibility into scrap and yield have also increased.



WHAT'S NEXT WITH PLEX

The future is bright with Plex at Stewart EFi. The team is actively working towards implementing both Plant and Equipment Maintenance and Human Capital Management. Additionally, employees hope to continue leveraging IntelliPlex and strive to automate even more workflows, including quality alerts, maintenance scheduling, and compliance reporting.

“Before Plex, we struggled with outdated systems, manual data entry, and limited visibility into our operations. Now with Plex, we have a cloud-based, connected platform that gives us real-time insights, automates key processes, and empowers our team to make faster, smarter decisions with confidence.”

SAM YOHANNAN
IT Director, Stewart EFi

ABOUT PLEX

Plex, by Rockwell Automation, is a leader in cloud-delivered smart manufacturing solutions, empowering the world's manufacturers to make awesome products. Our platform gives manufacturers the ability to connect, automate, track, and analyze every aspect of their business to drive transformation. The Plex Smart Manufacturing Platform™ includes solutions for manufacturing execution (MES), ERP, quality, supply

chain planning and management, asset performance management, production monitoring, process automation and analytics to connect people, systems, machines and supply chains, enabling them to lead with precision, efficiency and agility. To learn more, visit www.plex.com