

PEN Locks up Efficiencies with SYSPRO

"SYSPRO offers a great deal of flexibility with all of its system options. It has allowed us to customize the system to meet our diverse needs. It is this flexibility which has enabled us to plan for the LAN to tie the new Miami County facility into the system."

Ron Wood, Systems Analyst, PEN Products



■ The Company

Prison Enterprises Network, better known as PEN Products, is perhaps one of the more unique customers using SYSPRO software. Based in Indianapolis, PEN is a division of the Indiana Department of Correction, which is the penitentiary system for the state. This prison system has housed such infamous individuals as John Dillinger and Mike Tyson.

PEN Products produces a variety of durable and non-durable goods in its facilities. Many of the items are used or consumed within the correctional facilities throughout Indiana, while many are also marketed to the general public. This "umbrella" operation helps to provide meaningful jobs for the offenders interned within the Indiana institutional prison system and offsets the costs of maintaining the state's prisons.

The number of PEN Products' manufacturing sites now totals nine, the latest having been added in 1998 as part of a new Miami County penitentiary. PEN also operates three farms. Combined, the 12 units produce diverse products such as food stuffs, license plates, clothing, beds, mattresses, dormitory and office furniture, concrete products, soaps and detergents and outdoor equipment for Indiana state parks.

■ The Challenge

In 1995, PEN Products began evaluating its information requirements, recognizing the need to automate the dissemination of business information throughout its multifaceted manufacturing and farming operations. PEN realized the importance of implementing new procedures to meet the requirements of fiscal self-sufficiency. The real challenge at the time was to find one computer software package that could accommodate what were, in effect, about two dozen different businesses. Additional selection factors centered on having to operate within a governmental/correctional/business environment and the ability to compete in the marketplace with efficient, private sector product and service providers.

■ AT A GLANCE ■

COMPANY

Prison Enterprises Network – PEN Products

INDUSTRY

Furniture and Fittings
Agriculture
Manufacturing

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

80 users

THE CHALLENGE

- Need to automate the dissemination of business information throughout multifaceted manufacturing and farming operations
- Fiscal self-sufficiency
- One computer solution for multiple diverse businesses
- Operating within a governmental, correctional, business environment
- Competition from private sector organizations

SOLUTION & SERVICES

- Financials
- Work in Progress
- Material Requirements Planning
- B2B Trading
- Product Configurator
- Office Automation
- Screen Customization
- e.net Manager

THE BENEFITS

- SYSPRO facilitates and co-ordinates all purchasing, product manufacturing and shipping operations
- Able to produce financial statements on a monthly basis
- Able to view sales, inventory and shipping information on a dynamic basis
- Improved decision-making
- Flexibility





■ **The Solution**

A search was conducted, and the choice was SYSPRO enterprise software. A major reason for the selection was the software's ability to fit a wide variety of accounting, distribution and manufacturing applications. SYSPRO's diverse range of over 40 modules offered each business unit the opportunity to implement a tailored software solution for greater control and management.

As only limited resources were available, a time phased implementation strategy was adopted to facilitate a smooth transition to the new computer technology. By 1997 SYSPRO software modules were being fully used in the areas of financial control, sales, purchasing, inventory and shop floor production.

All accounting and distribution software modules are installed at PEN Products' central office in Indianapolis. Eleven manufacturing and farming operations throughout the state are online to the central database. While seven use dial-in lines, six sites, including the newest facility in Miami County, communicate via a dedicated LAN.

■ **The Result**

The software facilitates and co-ordinates all purchasing, product manufacturing and shipping operations. For the first time in its 80-year history, PEN Products had the ability to produce financial statements on a monthly basis. This, along with the ability to view sales, inventory and shipping information on a dynamic basis, allows management to make more informed decisions.

PEN Products' implementation team – Director, Nancy Davis Broglin, Chief of Operations, Doyle Raines, and Systems Analyst, Ron Wood – were instrumental in phasing the software into service without any program modifications. The team's efforts resulted in a smooth transition as well as a highly cost-efficient one.

According to Wood, "SYSPRO offers a great deal of flexibility with all of its system options. It has allowed us to customize the system to meet our diverse needs. It is this flexibility which has enabled us to plan for the LAN to tie the new Miami County facility into the system."

