

## BKW Instruments reaps the rewards of automated processes

BKW Instruments (BKW) began using K3 Syspro seven years ago to improve its manufacturing and delivery processes. Since then, with the help of K3's technical experts, it has adapted and developed its SYSPRO ERP system to make it work across a whole range of its business processes. This use of integrated technology to lead manufacturing is a key driver in the sector.

### Excellent Support

BKW is a leading supplier, manufacturer and distributor of instrumentation solutions across a number of industries including water, pharmaceutical, food and beverage, oil and gas, energy, HVAC and more. When looking at ways the business could automate a number of its manual manufacturing processes, while increasing output, the company explored the ways leveraging machine to machine data could help.

*BKW's Operations and IT Manager Adam Baker comments: "It is so good to have someone we can call in with all the technical expertise we need to adapt and bespoke the systems to meet our business needs. The experts at K3 Syspro have been with us every step of the way to future-proof our company and give us a real competitive edge."*

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### At a glance

#### Company

BKW Industries

#### Industry sector

Manufacturing of Instruments

#### SIC Code

26511

- Manufacture of electronic instruments and appliances for measuring, testing, and navigation, except industrial process control equipment

#### Number of employees

60 +

#### The challenge

- Manual processes
- Delivery times highly competitive with likes of Amazon
- Reduce data entry errors

#### Solution & services

- SYSPRO ERP
- Driveworks

#### The benefits

- Accurate and timely quoting resulting in 100% increase in number of quotes produced daily
- Carousel system with bins means less space needed
- Savings in time and savings as reduced errors



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### A targeted system

BKW chose K3 Syspro because it offers a targeted solution rather than a generic one. The business wanted a system which was sector specific rather than a one size fits all. And SYSPRO ERP works for BKW because it has grown and developed to do far more than what was originally intended when it was first introduced seven years ago. Now, it looks after everything from stock control and ordering to providing bespoke quotes for customers. This gives BKW a real edge in terms of significant time savings, reductions in errors, and an increase in the company's competitiveness. Accurate and timely quoting is vital to win new business in a rapidly changing marketplace where customer demand and expectations are much higher when it comes to the lead time between enquiry to product delivery.

### Bespoke Consultancy

The intelligent, business-focused consultancy which K3 Syspro provides is what attracted BKW in the first place. And it is what keeps the company with K3 Syspro too. For BKW, having someone in-house full-time with that level of technical expertise and the knowledge of the manufacturing industry isn't necessary. Nor is it good business sense in terms of the staffing costs that would be needed for that level of expertise. It is also hard to find one individual with the right blend of business and industry knowledge as well as the relevant technical expertise and skills. K3 Syspro is able to send in experts to work on projects, further developing and tweaking the solution to suit the needs of the business

*Baker explains: "The consultants we have had from K3 have been first class. Whether you have an issue or whether you have new ideas you want to incorporate or whether you want to add other elements of the business onto the system, they understand the need for it all to make sense in business terms as well as handling all the technical aspects. This has represented good value for money for BKW because it has given us the solutions we've needed quickly and effectively, and it's why we have stayed with K3."*

### Quicker Order Processing

The investment in SYSPRO ERP allows for goods to be tracked and followed through the system from the minute they arrive. As soon as the Goods Received Notice (GRN) is put onto the product, the ERP means the items can be traced and tracked by everyone in the business from customer services through to the logistics and despatch.

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The move from manual to automated processing systems prompted BKW to look at its whole logistics operation and how technology and automation could streamline this. The company implemented a carousel system where stock is stored in bins and is barcoded. The barcode then tells the logistics staff not just which shelf particular items are on, but pinpoints exactly where they are such as 32 shelves high, six bins deep, etc. A job card is then generated which ties in with all of this including customer services. With over £1million pound of pressure and temperate UK stock, being able to track, pick and deliver quickly makes sense and reduces room for error and duplication.



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### Space Saving

Another major benefit has been that BKW no longer needs to think about having to move to bigger premises in terms of logistics space. Having a carousel system with bins means less space is needed. Instead of rows and rows of shelves taking up room, the space can be used for other things. There is now a Quality and Inspection area within the logistics and an In Progress section for orders on the way out. Space is always at a premium so if there is a better way of using what is already there then all the better. It also allows for better stock management as the system will tell you when you need to order more. This obviously helps with cashflow too.

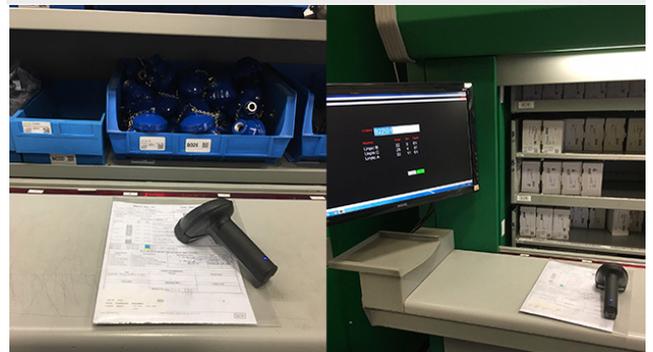
K3 Syspro also works with BKW's new IT System Manager and has adapted Crystal Reports to create and automate systems which had previously relied on manual paperwork which had too much room for error from typos to illegible handwritten notes. Now when staff press print, a report is generated, a label created, the stock found quickly and easily.

### Pricing and Quotes

Having a way of automating quotes which could still cope with the wide variety of items BKW provides has made a real difference. The company's products have a range of different connectors depending on where the customers are based e.g. Europe, UK, USA etc. The team from K3 Syspro was able to configure and integrate Driveworks to suit the business needs utilising a product configurator which has resulted in a 100 per cent increase in the number of quotes able to be produced daily. This is because the correct information is generated at the start. By streamlining this part of the solution with form building applications, it means new customers can be added to the system and other admin work carried out without having to constantly move in and out of different forms, resulting in savings in both time and effort and also reducing room for errors.

Driveworks is for us, the best of breed solution. The design automation programme runs on Microsoft Windows and can connect to any existing sales configurator to automate the design function.

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Baker goes on to say: *"The system has been built to be bespoke to BKW. It now allows us to produce quotes at the touch of a button, which means we have been able to generate twice as many quotes in a day as in the past. In a rapidly changing marketplace, where customers have high expectations on delivery times which has been driven by the likes of Amazon, it's important for companies like ours to be able to keep pace."*

### Tracking Progress

These days, customers always want to know where their order is at any given time, and when it is going to be delivered. BKW is working with K3 Syspro on a system where order progress is tracked so the company can give the customer an answer there and then. Previously, when customer services received a call they would only be able to give out an estimated, and longer, delivery time and it was time consuming to establish where a product was in the system. With the new system anyone within the company who has access to a PC or mobile device such as a tablet will be able to see instantly where exactly that order is in the system. This offers a much better customer experience, and helps BKW to build and maintain strong customer relations.



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### Best Experience

Baker says: *“Definitely the best experience of working with K3 is the consultancy they provide which offers both business and industry knowledge as well as technical expertise. In our industry, we need to keep an eye on costs and employing staff is expensive in any business, but with K3, it is far more effective to hire in their consultants for three or four days to work on a project and to give us the help, advice and expertise we need.*

*“It is this ability to be able to give them a call and then have someone at a technical level to come in who understands the system and can talk you through it from a human point of view that is really valuable to us. K3 understands how to communicate on a business level too and it is incredibly hard to find people with that mix of skills.”*

### The future is now

Increasingly, customers are expecting the same experience in terms of ordering items from the likes of Amazon and Ebay in their business lives as well. This means having a system which works as simply and effectively as theirs. Customers simply don't want to wait three or four weeks for an item. They want it now! Which is why, BKW have recently launched its own BKW Quickship where customers can now receive delivery of products the next day.

As it looks into the future, and entering into the Industry 4.0 era. BKW are in the process of developing BKW Quickbuild allowing configuration of items within 5 working days down from 4 weeks. BKW is keen to continue to future-proof its business, and sees technology as being the key to this.

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