

Improving document processes and production at FG Wilson

JIT manual production delivers cost savings
and a 100% increase in productivity



The bigger the company; The bigger the savings



Background

FG Wilson, a wholly owned subsidiary of engineering giant Caterpillar, produces diesel and gas powered electricity generators from its Larne manufacturing plant, 25 miles north of Belfast. With 2,000 employees, business is booming and the company exports 99 per cent of its generators overseas to areas as diverse as South America, the Middle/Far East and South Africa.

The Challenge

With every generator sold, a manual pack needs to be shipped with the generating set to assist the buyer in the operation and maintenance of the unit. In addition, customers will often request duplicate manuals, replacing those that have been mislaid, become damaged from use in the field, or simply as spares.

Exporting to so many diverse areas means that FG Wilson has to be able to produce manuals in different languages that often change as technology develops, and different models are launched. By law, the group must print manuals in every language of the European Union and, for its global audience, it also prints in other widely spoken languages such as Arabic and Russian.

Originally, FG Wilson outsourced its printing to specialists and manually collated offset printed material from its various suppliers to make up the manual pack. In total, FG Wilson had 10 staff fulfilling the manuals and anything up to 17 different suppliers involved in the process of production. This process involved significant management time and resource whilst creating unacceptable levels of wastage through obsolete stock.

The complexity of this process meant that a significant proportion of manuals were shipped with some or all of the manual pack missing, outdated manual components or incorrect languages incorporated.

The Solution

Given the drag on time, resource and productivity that the existing process was having, FG Wilson decided action had to be taken. FG Wilson created a Six Sigma Project to review the processes and present solutions to eliminate problems and improve quality and service of the manuals department.

Xerox was one of several document management service providers that FG Wilson approached to help resolve the situation, but was the only one to come up with a solution that enabled the company to retain control of the printing facility in-house. It was also the most cost-effective and flexible.

“Having our manual production handled off-site did not suit our needs,” John continued. “Here we can change things in an instant as and when the need arises.”

After selection as the preferred solution provider Xerox Global Services worked closely with FG Wilson on the implementation phase of the Six Sigma Project.

Xerox Global Services worked with FG Wilson to analyse the existing processes and proposed a bespoke Xerox DocuTech hardware and software solution to move the existing document process to a ‘Just In Time’ system, enabling greater flexibility in manual production and allowing personalised materials to be output in formats to include CD – ROM and the Web, as well as the traditional digital print format.

The Xerox Just in Time Product Documentation (JITPD) and PrintCise solutions formed the core components of the solution. This entailed the redesign of the manual pack for optimal production, digital print and finishing. Order input is possible direct from the customer’s SAP system at which point, the bill of materials is sorted according to sales order number, component manual type and language.

Five Xerox personnel are now based at FG Wilson's plant to manage the service provision responsible for delivery of the defined service levels to include print management, technical drawings production, collation and finishing. The team are fully cross-trained, maximising on productivity and role variation.

FG Wilson and Xerox worked closely to implement the various stages of the Project and FG Wilson was impressed with the level of commitment that Xerox Global Services showed to get an effective job done. From concept, the project took nine months to deliver, with the Xerox Global Services integration phase during the final three months of that period.

The Results

By the turn of 2004, the project had been in place a year and results were assessed under the "control" phase of Six Sigma. As well as re-directing staff to more mission-critical areas of the business and eliminating stock obsolescence, John stated that the new system has coped with a productivity increase of 100%.

"Under the old system, we were assembling around 600-700 manuals per week, this figure now stands at 1,200," he said. "This is due to increased business activity. Under the old system we would have had to employ additional personnel and increase stock to cope with the growth, so the document management project is an integral part of the company's progress."



"The document management project is an integral part of the company's progress."

John Stewart, Six Sigma Project Manager for FG Wilson

The project also delivered annual savings of £250,000 in its first year, almost 60 per cent more than anticipated, calculated in terms of staff redeployment, reduction of inventory and cost of materials. "The project has also further improved customer service," John added. "As delivery of complete manual packs is now guaranteed to be timely and the content is now controlled by the SAP based Bill of Material, eliminating the quality issues of the old system."

FG Wilson

The Challenge

- Generator operating and maintenance packs needed to be available in multiple languages
- 10 staff and up to 17 suppliers involved in pack production
- Significant proportion of packs shipped with elements missing, outdated components or incorrect languages

The Solution

- Bespoke Xerox DocuTech hardware and software implemented
- 5 Xerox staff on site at customer to manage all aspects of service provision
- JIT document process enabling personalised manuals to be made available in variety of formats

The Results

- Over 1,200 manuals assembled per week, a 100% productivity increase
- Savings of over £250,000 in year 1, 60% more than anticipated
- Improved end customer service

About Fuji Xerox Global Services

Documents are positioned as increasingly important management resources for today's corporate activities. Fuji Xerox provides outsourcing services that focus on the document and business processes of customers who conduct business in Japan and globally. Based on our extensive consulting experience, optimal IT utilisation and worldwide service provision structures, Fuji Xerox can efficiently manage all documents processes – from production and storage to output and usage – to achieve cost reductions and higher productivity, while also contributing to customers' business growth as their ultimate business partner.

For more information, visit us at

Fuji Xerox Global Services

Fuji Xerox Co., Ltd
80 Anson Road, #37-00 Fuji Xerox Towers
Singapore 079907
Email: fxgsenquiry@fujixerox.com

<http://www.fujixerox.com/eng/solution/globalservices/>

