

1972 – 2009 TEXT VERSION

Initially known as Dewtec Systems, overtime the company evolved into R&D Concepts – Synchro³² The Synchro team has been involved in the creation and development of Investment and Foundry Specific Production Control ERP/MRP software solutions since 1972. Synchro³² is the company's fourth system.

Founded by a university lecturer and a student

Involved directly with research related to 'The Investment and Metal Casting Industry' when computers were still in their infancy; Trevor Law began as a result of consulting work he had been doing with a number of foundries, foundry equipment suppliers and research associations such as SCRATA, BNFMRA and BCIRA.

This coincided with consulting work he had was doing with Quaker Oats Chemicals Inc, of USA into building computerized cost models of foundry operation. Trevor Law was analyzing the potential cost benefits for foundries of switching to the Furan Sand Binder (the Quaker system) rather than other competing systems such as CO2/silicate bonded sands. The bonus to Quaker would be increased sales of their chemical product 'furfuryl alcohol' which was a by-product of their Quaker Oats breakfast product....

Between 1972 and 1977 a number of research projects were run with large Investment Casters and foundries (F H Lloyd & Co Ltd, (West Midlands), Catton Foundries Ltd (Leeds), and Leys Malleable Foundries, (Derby) plus several others in the USA. At this time two of the Research Associations had developed their own Production Control Systems which were being investigated by larger Investment foundries at an average cost of \$90,000 for the software and \$110/120,000 for hardware. Predictably it was only the largest manufacturers who purchased at such expense. Smaller companies could not conceive of installing such high end technology at such cost. These extortionate costs became the deciding factor for Dewtec/ Synchro to develop a costing and production control solution and open up the availability to the wider Investment and cast metal industry.

Investment casters have differing requirements to other cast metal manufacturers. As a few brief examples; unique requirement for movement from individual products (waxes) to grouped product (Trees) and then back to an individual product (Part) the requirement for large number of processes. Product tracking and WIP valuation, the accommodation of multiple groupings of products at differing processes within manufacturing cycle, multiple waxes and from wax dies, multiple waxes per tree. These requirements were a necessity to realize if viable 'Production Control Software' was to be of use to them.

Small and medium manufactures were eager to use the technology and sales climbed at an increasing rate. Customers began requesting alterations, upgrades and improvement. These were the people actually applying the system to production processes; they were at the sharp end of the systems' functionality.

Dewtec/Synchro's initial principles were to translate the requirements of the industry into workable software, concentrate on providing good technical support and price would not be a barrier to procurement; and affordability would not be an obstacle to the installation and use of the system.

The company has not wavered from these initial values and they stand as the backbone to their success but even more important to the success of their customer base.

More sophisticated systems, through programming and technical innovation

The need for a re write became apparent, incorporating many new ideas from the substantial user base, improvement in functionality and technical innovation with rapidly advancing hardware, software, and language development, great efforts were made to create a more user friendly and intuitive ways of working; These were just a few of the refinements incorporated in the new software.

No internet, no email...no cell phone

Remember there was no internet, no email, no cell phones; calling out of state and international was expensive. The company relied exclusively on floppy disks mailed out to customers to upgrade, amend reports and some corrections. This went on for some years until eventually technology in communications slowly improved. And now, as is the case for most people in the world, instant communication 24/7 literally business never stops!

Many of the production managers and managing directors had never touched a key board and hardware was frightening. In retrospect they were real pioneers, but the company persevered supporting these casting manufacturers through installation and training. Support was critical, knowing that technical support and help was a phone call away gave them confidence, and it paid off. Synchro has hundreds of small to medium sized Investment and casting manufacturers and many have been with the company since the '70s. They are the core of the business today, in2009... many of them are on their 4th system

In the early days customization was necessary and still remains a significant requirement for new customers; over time this led to standardization and a real understanding of how our customers differed. Linking to external systems, accounting, shop floor data collection devices, EDI, bar coding and other external large MRP/ERP systems such as SAP and SAPIENS.

Today - New online install and training

In view to keeping costs down for our customers, and in recognition of the ever changing environment of the casting sector, they recently instigated a complete online (remote) installation and training facility for smaller companies; a single user version is also available. The company has expanded into the Far East and Asia where Specific Systems are relatively new. These new markets have differing business cultures and as a result of a fair amount of research they recently launched an online installation and training program, although this is only available to small user numbers it was born from the very valid concerns about the amount of IT knowledge required, cost of international travel for training and the quality of support they can expect.

Chris Collins MD & CEO

“Honour and a reputation for reliability are hard earned; we have developed a strong reputation for state of the art solutions specific to the investment and cast metal Industry, with no involvement in any other manufacturing sector. Now more than ever, we face different challenges to those in the 1970's...”

“I consider myself very fortunate indeed to be so privileged; working with thousands of users and as many success stories, we are truly honoured to serve our Industry. Customer is king; each member of our team breath this silent mantra, it is an essential element in everything we do. It's good to work with such passion for the business and a responsibility toward the cast metal sector.”

Offices: USA, UK, Brazil, Germany, Spain (October opening '09)

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