

Cleaver-Brooks reduces costs and achieves growth with IFS



With manufacturing engineer-to-order, configure-to-order and make-to-order products it can be difficult to funnel time and effort into all product lines, especially when your business is experiencing considerable growth and when products are the size of semi-trailers. This is what Cleaver-Brooks, the leading manufacturer of boiler room equipment across commercial, institutional and industrial markets, faces daily. With the help of IFS, Cleaver-Brooks has reduced costs and grown faster without having to increase manpower.

Cleaver-Brooks runs better

Cleaver-Brooks is a complete boiler room solutions provider that helps businesses run better every day. It develops hot water and steam generation products aimed at integrating and optimizing the total boiler/burner/controls system to maximize energy efficiency and reliably while minimizing emissions. "We're a leader in the industry and IFS allows us to take fewer resources and continuously grow the business by handling more transactions and more functionality as we grow," said Allan Lackas, Director of Business Applications for Cleaver-Brooks.

By considering the number of Cleaver-Brooks locations, legacy systems and organizational objectives, it was determined that the best implementation approach was implementing each site one by one. "Cleaver-Brooks has evolved into a universal company. Our silos are starting to merge together. In the past, there were many different lines of responsibility and those are starting to roll together for our company with the help of IFS," said Lackas. The strength of the implementation team and the utilization of IFS optimized many business processes for Cleaver-Brooks. "When implementing software, you need to make sure you have a great team in place and the people being supplied from the outside are also top quality. IFS people and their resources have been very good for us. They understand our business and continue learning what we need to do as we move forward."

About Cleaver-Brooks

Cleaver-Brooks is a complete boiler room solutions provider that helps businesses run better every day. It develops hot water and steam generation products aimed at integrating and optimizing the total boiler/burner/controls system to maximize energy efficiency and reliability while minimizing emissions. The company was founded in 1929 by John C. Cleaver, who started manufacturing small, portable boilers. Cleaver and Raymond Brooks formed Cleaver-Brooks in 1931 and began mass-producing boilers. Through a commitment to research and development and a sound acquisition strategy, today the company is the sole provider of integrated boiler/burner/controls solutions and is a leading manufacturer of boiler room equipment across commercial, institutional and industrial markets.

www.cleaverbrooks.com



Cleaver-Brooks has approximately 600 IFS users and roughly 1,500 employees. “All of our manufacturing operations are running IFS. We have operations in French Quebec and operations in Mexico, so our basic environment is set up in English, Spanish and French,” said Lackas. By supporting multi-language and multi-currency, business can be conducted globally and seamlessly. Cleaver-Brooks’ success in this area has even resulted in the expansion of manufacturing into the Chinese market.

One system of record

Manufacturing large products means dealing with large quantities of parts and characteristics. To manufacture larger boilers, anywhere from 300 to 600 different characteristics are required in the bill of materials. IFS helps manage the manufacturing and engineering of Cleaver-Brooks boilers by optimizing the creation of a bill of materials without having to do so manually. “We use IFS to run through a configured order process using rules to determine which dynamic part is necessary and create a dynamic bill of material for that product. Our legacy systems were giving us challenges in this area, but IFS met those needs,” said Lackas.

To further optimize processes, Cleaver-Brooks utilizes IFS Lobbies to centralize data from multiple screens into a single screen and increase the visibility of key metrics to avoid surprises and better plan day-to-day activities. “With IFS, we have single-screen, visual tools which enable users to click on a problem area, drill into that specific information and quickly resolve an issue. These same tools allow management to go in and see how manufacturing operations are running. The visibility helped us find efficiencies within our operation,” said Lackas.

Cleaver-Brooks runs many components of IFS to conduct its business. “IFS really is the system of record for all of our business transactions. It supports and runs every piece of the business that we’re using today,” said Lackas.

Benefits of IFS

Cleaver-Brooks recently took a new plant live on IFS. The plant is experiencing the benefits of planning safety stock and expects that inventory will decrease 30 to 40 percent over the next six to eight months. IFS helps shorten lead time by allowing for a more accurate bill of materials. It allows for more rules to generate a bill of materials and provides information to ensure Cleaver-Brooks has the resources to build boilers on a quicker basis. “By using IFS, we’ve concluded that we could greatly reduce our lead times in delivering products to the customer,” said Lackas.

Since implementation, Cleaver-Brooks has grown significantly in the last eight to ten years. “IFS is a great investment for Cleaver-Brooks. It has brought us visibility of increased information and I think it’s given management the capability to consider the future, be able to look at new ventures and drive business decisions,” said Lackas.

Benefits seen using IFS

- Multi-mode manufacturing
- Greatly reduce lead time to deliver products to customers
- One system of record
- Growth of business
- Increased visibility of business information to drive business decisions
- Configurability of solution increased ease of use for end users





IFS features a high degree of configurability and ease of use for its users. “What I like about IFS is the ability to configure a screen so I can use whatever icons I want to use and set aside those that I don’t need,” said Lackas. The flexibility of the solution makes any job easier. “IFS makes my day a lot easier. I spend my time addressing and making improvements to our process, rather than trying to pull data and sort through it. Every day I have the information I need right in front of me and it’s real time, so I can see what’s going on in the business at any time,” said Lackas.

I don’t know that anything is more vital to our business than IFS. IFS is our system of record, contains all of our information and is the basis for making all of our decisions going forward.

Allan Lackas, Director of Business Applications, Cleaver-Brooks

What’s next

Implementing IFS has enabled Cleaver-Brooks to reduce costs and grow the business faster with the same number of employees. “I don’t know that anything is more vital to our business than IFS. IFS is our system of record, contains all of our information and is the basis for making all of our decisions going forward,” said Lackas.

Part of the Cleaver-Brooks strategy includes regular upgrades with new releases of IFS to remain current with the IFS software. “We’re greatly looking forward to what the Internet of Things and connected technology brings to our industry to drive our business forward in the future,” said Lackas.

Software

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- Greatly reduce lead time to deliver products to customers
- One system of record
- Growth of business
- Increased visibility of business information to drive business decisions
- Configurability of solution increased ease of use for end users

Find out more

Further information, e-mail info@ifs.com, contact your local IFS office or visit our web site, ifs.com

