

SIEMENS

Ingenuity for life

Aerospace and defense

Proform

Tubular parts manufacturer uses Preactor APS to increase administrative efficiency of work centers by 87 percent

Product

Manufacturing Operations Management

Business challenges

Implement a scheduling solution that can keep pace with the company's growth

Manage diverse materials, part types and deadlines

Increase manufacturing capacity

Keys to success

Anticipate spikes or lulls in workflow

Optimize the use of raw materials

Improve project management capabilities

Results

Increased administrative efficiency of work centers by 87 percent

Improved the ability to meet deadlines and achieved a 96 percent on-time delivery rate

Multiplied workload by 20X

Reduced the number of people administering work centers from three to one

Siemens PLM Software solution enables Proform to better meet deadlines and significantly multiply workload

A small company with a long reach

Founded in 1967 and located southwest of Lyon, France, Proform first specialized in the cold forming of tubes, and then quickly became a specialist in the bending of all types of stainless steel and nickel alloys.

Today Proform is a key player in the market dedicated to manufacturing complex tubular parts, and participates in a number of industries, including chemicals, pulp and paper, food and beverage, pharmaceuticals, aerospace and automotive.

Proform's know-how includes cold bending, end-shaping, hydroforming, crimping and welding.

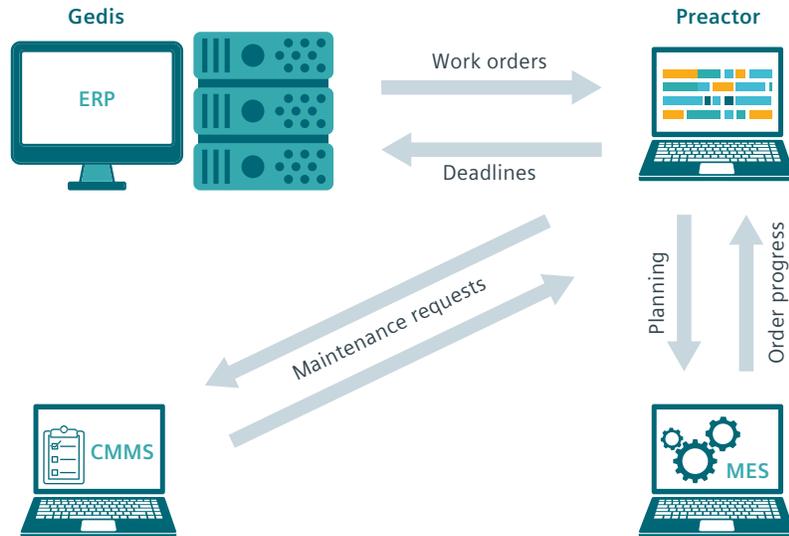
They use a variety of materials, including steel, stainless steel, copper, aluminum, nickel alloy and titanium. The diameter of the pipes varies between 4 and 406.4 millimeters (mm).

Proform has 210 employees and facilities covering 40,000 square meters, and yearly revenue of €28 million, with more than 60 percent of that coming from exports. It has a dealer network covering more than 40 countries.



"In a period of 20 years, the workload has been multiplied by 20."

Frédéric Bréchon
Planning Manager
Proform



"In the past, three people within the planning department dealt with 30 work centers running eight hours a day, whereas now one person in the department deals with 260 work centers running 24 hours a day."

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Why a scheduling tool is necessary

In 1994, scheduling was done on a wall board. In 1999, Proform adopted Excel spreadsheet software for scheduling, which the company rapidly outgrew.

Due to the types of parts produced -- from custom-made and single piece to large-scale production, the high number of referenced finished products (7,000 references, including 1,000 custom-made), the diverse materials used and various constraints, there was no choice but to set up a dedicated scheduling tool.

Even though the company needed little persuasion, the following data convinced Proform it needed the capabilities of a real scheduling tool: The firm had 1,500 continuous work orders, 5,000 operations in the planning and 12 production areas, which included 260 work centers. So the project was officially launched in 2005.

The information technology (IT) architecture that was selected is described below:

Infinite-capacity planning, bill-of-materials (BOM) and routes are managed in the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. Work orders are passed on to Preactor APS, which is used to communicate with two other systems: The manufacturing execution system (MES) to update the planning according to the state of progress of the operations in the workshops, and the computerized maintenance management system (CMMS), which passes on the maintenance action requests.

The sales department also relies on Preactor APS to conduct simulations and plan projected orders so they will understand the load and impact on ongoing orders.

"We have total confidence in Preactor APS."

Frédéric Bréchon
Planning Manager
Proform

Solutions/Services

Preactor APS

www.plm.automation.siemens.com/global/en/products/manufacturing-operations-center/simatic-it-preactor-aps.html

Customer's primary business

Founded in 1967, Proform first focused on the cold forming of tubes, but quickly specialized in the bending of all types of stainless steel and nickel alloys. Today the company has a dealer network in over 40 countries and sales of more than €28 million, over 60 percent in exports.
www.proform.fr/en/

Customer location

Chaponost
France

Further, Preactor APS is used by the engineering department to schedule production. Indeed, since Proform produces numerous custom-made parts, the company chose to develop its own tools and machines.

When a custom-made part is ordered, the deadline promised to the customer takes into account the deadline of tools/machines manufacturing, with manufacturing integrated into the planning.

Preactor APS delivers benefits

"In a period of 20 years, the workload has been multiplied by 20," says Bréchon.

"In the past, three people within the planning department dealt with 30 work centers running eight hours a day, whereas now one person in the department deals with 260 work centers running 24 hours a day."

As a result, the company now:

- Better anticipates critical situations
- Reliably meets deadlines
- Optimizes manufacturing supplies
- Reduces manufacturing waste
- Capitalizes on technical data
- Improves project management
- Increases working capacity

"We have total confidence in Preactor APS," says Bréchon. "When the planning department announces a deadline, internally or to the customers via the sales department, we know that it will be observed."

"We also send extracts of planning to some of our suppliers to offer them a better visibility into our material needs."

"When the planning department announces a deadline, internally or to the customers via the sales department, we know that it will be observed."

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Planning Manager
Proform

Siemens PLM Software

Americas +1 314 264 8499
Europe +44 (0) 1276 413200
Asia-Pacific +852 2230 3333

www.siemens.com/plm

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