

"Overtime on the powder line is non-existent now that we've upgraded to ITW Gema!"



THE COMPANY

Quest Manufacturing, Inc., a leading manufacturer and marketer of quality air cylinders and fabricated parts, produces three main products: reservoir tanks used for storage of compressed air, air receiver lines that drive pneumatic construction tools, and a specialty line of miscellaneous tanks.

THE CHALLENGE

Quest was working with very old powder coating equipment. Their existing powder coating booth and guns, purchased from one of ITW Gema's competitors, were inefficient and expensive to operate. In order to grow their business and earn new customers, Quest knew they had to upgrade their powder line to stay competitive.

THE SOLUTION

Fortunately for Quest, a neighboring business had recently upgraded to a new system from ITW Gema. Quest visited the plant, observed the new system and discussed their results. They were so impressed, that they requested a demonstration from ITW Gema. In the end, Quest purchased an OptiBasic™ system, including six OptiGuns™, OptiTronic™ control units and OptiFlow™ pumps.

THE SAVINGS

According to Dan Kastrup, Production Manager, "ITW Gema promised us a 33% reduction in powder costs. What we actually got was 40 to 50% savings!" The new system has reduced Quest's reject rate to almost nothing. They not only eliminated 20 hours of overtime per week, but have reduced overall labor costs by 5%. Quest had anticipated that the system would pay for itself in 7 months, but achieved payback in only 5!

"The improvement in maintenance is night-and-day, and we've eliminated 20 labor hours of overtime a week. We expected a 7 month payback on this project, but hit it in only 5."

Dan Kastrup, Quest Manufacturing, Inc.

ITW Gema

Superior By All Measures



READY TO UPGRADE?
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THE LEADERS**

Leaders Like Quest

Call 800-628-0601 and ask for Debra or visit www.itwgema.com/upgrade for a free assessment of your powder coating operation.

Quest Eliminates Overtime and Lowers Labor Costs With OptiSystem™

"The system from ITW Gema is extremely user-friendly."

An OptiBasic™ system from ITW Gema enabled Quest Manufacturing, Inc. to increase quality and become more profitable.

A case study from Quest Manufacturing, Inc.

Quest realized that if they wanted to grow their company and entice new businesses to give them a try, they needed to upgrade their powder coating system. Their new OptiBasic system from ITW Gema has helped them achieve their goals.

Company Background

Quest Manufacturing, Inc. of Strafford, Missouri is a company on its way up. Privately owned by a team of

investors, Quest follows an "open book" management philosophy, with a future goal to become fully employee owned.

Quest's primary business is manufacturing compressed air tanks. Their largest product line consists of brake tanks for tractor-trailers, but they also produce pneumatic receiver lines for the construction industry, as well as a line of miscellaneous specialty tanks.



Existing Equipment and Challenges

Quality is very important to Quest's business. The Department of Transportation requires a test of double the usable pressure of a tank, but Quest elects to test above that level. Each tank must also undergo 48 hours of external, and 96 hours of internal salt spray testing.

The existing equipment was a mixture of various pieces and parts and was antiquated, difficult to clean and service, and costly to operate. Powder was practically pouring out of the guns and there was almost no electrostatic charge. The paint line could not keep up and there was a lot of airborne powder. Keeping the powder coating area clean was a nightmare, and the wasted powder was costing Quest a lot of money.

A neighboring business had just upgraded to an OptiSystem from ITW Gema. They were thrilled with their results and invited Quest to see their set-up. Quest was so impressed that they called ITW Gema to come in and do an assessment of their own operation.

Following a successful 30-day trial, Quest decided that an economical OptiBasic system was the right solution for their needs. Goals of their upgrade included:

- 33% savings on powder costs
- Reduction of overtime
- Thinner, more consistent film builds

New Equipment Installed

A six-gun OptiBasic system was the logical choice for Quest. Its compact and economical design was a perfect fit for a company focused on saving money and avoiding waste.

The OptiBasic includes OptiGun™ automatic powder guns, OptiTronic™ control units and OptiFlow™ pumps. All of these components are designed for simplicity and economy. The OptiTronics allow Quest to program and store coating "recipes," enabling quality performance to be repeated time and time again with ease.



Regarding the start-up of the system, Dan Kastrop, Production Manager, remarked, "Installation and training was simple. The staff of ITW Gema and their local distributor, Fluid-Air Products, showed us what to do, let us run it by ourselves, then checked on our progress and answered our questions. I turned it over to the guys and they ran with it!" Josh Hull, Powder Line Leader and Tom Smith, Paint Booth Operator, commented that the OptiBasic was very user-friendly and easy to learn. Maintaining the system is a snap and very little input from management is needed.

Service after the sale has been very important to Quest. Fluid-Air Products, Inc. of St. Louis, Missouri, has been instrumental in the success of this project. "Steve at Fluid-Air checks in often," Dan remarked, "At least once a week."

Savings

"Gema offered to do a 30-day trial and promised us a 33% savings in powder," Dan said. "But it was clear before the trial was even over that we would exceed that mark."

Quest's savings included:

- 40 – 50% reduction in powder costs
- 20 hours of overtime a week eliminated and overall labor costs reduced by 5%
- Film builds of 6 to 11 mils in some areas have been reduced to 3 mils

Future Outlook

With a new and enthusiastic management team, an innovative business philosophy and the full participation of its employees, Quest is a company infused with forward momentum. Working with Fluid-Air Products, future expansions are sure to include equipment from ITW Gema.

