



Helping subcontract precision engineers streamline their entire production process

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AIM CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF SUCCESS WITH PSL DATATRACK

In 2024, Automatic Industrial Machines Ltd (AIM) celebrates a significant milestone – 25 years of partnership with PSL Datatrack, a UK-based provider of production control software for subcontract precision engineers. This enduring collaboration has transformed AIM's operations, propelling the company towards excellence in the aerospace industry and beyond.

Before embracing PSL Datatrack, AIM navigated its operations using manual systems for a quarter of a century. However, as the business expanded and more machinery was introduced, managing a growing volume of active orders became a daunting challenge. "The need for efficient production control and enhanced traceability became increasingly apparent," reflects Rob Kendall, Managing Director of AIM.

Established just over 50 years ago, AIM boasts an impressive array of approvals from aerospace industry giants such as Airbus UK, Hamble Aerostructures, GKN Aerospace and BAE Systems, as well as being AS9100 and ISO 9001 accredited. With a workforce of 30 dedicated professionals it also serves the motorsport, automotive and food processing machinery industries and is involved in research and development (R&D) projects.



The company's strengths lie in precision machining, steadfast adherence to quality and the ability to tackle complex projects with an extensive machinery arsenal. This comprises of 35 machines, including CNC machining & turning centres and manual cylindrical & surface grinders, as well as a number of cutting-edge automation systems. A double-decker with 33 pallets, feeding a 5-axis machining centre, was the first of its kind in the country.

AIM's quest for a solution to streamline its production, all those years ago, led them to PSL Datatrack and the subsequent implementation was driven by a pivotal meeting which included PSL's now-Managing Director, Geoff Gartland. "Our aim was and still is to help our users streamline their entire production

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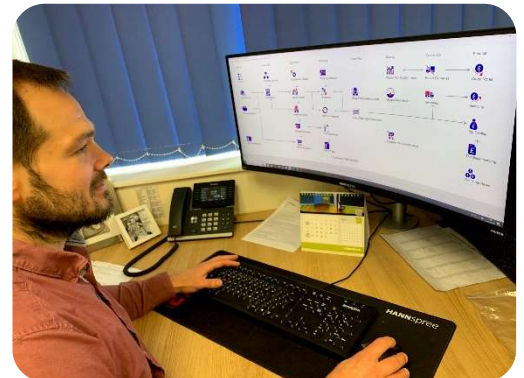
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process, covering all the steps required to win and manufacture a job whilst saving them administration time and costs,” explains Geoff.

Recognising the unique needs of AIM as pioneers in the aerospace sector, PSL Datatrack emerged as the preferred choice as a result of its willingness to tailor the system to suit AIM’s specific requirements. “PSL Datatrack listened to us and were willing to make the changes that we needed. That approach has continued into the present day,” comments Rob.

That move to a designated production control system was a significant leap forward for AIM. Comprehensive training facilitated a smooth implementation process, whilst the support from PSL Datatrack ensured any queries were swiftly addressed. Despite the ever-changing high precision manufacturing industry and technological advancements, various departments including management, quality assurance, accounts, inspection and stores continue to seamlessly utilise the software 25 years on.



AIM quickly noticed heightened efficiency and productivity gains as a result of the investment. Enhanced information sharing, streamlined processes from quotation to invoice and comprehensive traceability have streamlined audits and empowered the business to manage a much larger volume of orders to this day. “Between PSL Datatrack and ongoing investment in automation systems, there has been terrific growth over the years,” Rob remarks.

Rob also comments that AIM’s quoting success rate has drastically improved as a result of using PSL Datatrack. The system’s Quotations module is effectively the software equivalent of setting a machine tool – once the production process, materials, tooling and any subcontract work required have been detailed here, the information can be reused throughout the rest of the system to reduce the manual retyping of data and possible human error.

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“We had been quoting some customers with a very low success rate. PSL Datatrack helped us make the decision to stop performing work for some of them and use our time more wisely on developing existing and new clients,” continues Rob.

Looking ahead, AIM envisions further integration of PSL Datatrack modules including the Sequential Scheduler, which ensures works orders are correctly prioritised and materials available, and Shop Floor Data Collection (SFDC), which records shop floor activity for comparison to quotations supported by barcoded process layouts and scanners. The addition of live Status Boards will further improve performance and communication across the organisation, reinforcing AIM’s commitment to excellence.

“As AIM commemorates 25 years of partnership with PSL Datatrack, its journey stands as a testament to the transformative impact of production control software in the subcontract precision engineering industry. With unwavering support and unparalleled customer service, PSL Datatrack continues to be a trusted supplier, powering AIM towards greater heights of success,” says Rob.

“The system has served us very well over the years. PSL Datatrack’s customer service has been second to none, with fantastic support provided for any questions that we have,” concludes Rob. Whilst Automatic Industrial Machines Ltd embarks on the next phase of its journey, the anniversary of its investment in PSL Datatrack serves as a reminder of the enduring values of partnership and innovation in manufacturing.

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