



SUCCESS STORIES

CUSTOMER

Architectural Profiles Ltd (APL)

INDUSTRIES

Window Extrusions Manufacture

LOCATION

Hamilton, NZ

SOLUTION

V6, Saturn & PALS



SOFT TECH: 20-YEAR EXPERTS IN IMPROVING THE SUPPLY SYSTEMS OF NZ'S LARGEST WINDOW MANUFACTURER

Fortunately, most of the fashion icons of the 70's like big hair, platform heels & hot pants are vague memories, but one revolutionary New Zealand-made icon caught on - aluminium window framing. Through the years they've progressed from a one colour and style fits all 'choice' to any size, shape and powder-coated colour you like. Chances are the joinery in many of today's modern NZ homes was manufactured by APL and supplied and installed by one of their 80 plus licensed fabricators throughout the country.

THE BUSINESS SITUATION

Today, APL currently has about 45% share of NZ's window systems market with its Altherm, First,

Vantage, Smartwood and Architectural Series range of window frames and profiles that are distributed via a network of around 80 resellers/manufacturers. APL also incorporates INEX, an on-site aluminium extrusion plant along-side surface finishing facilities, FINEX and Colourworks.

In 1971 when APL started its joinery business, ordering was done via phone and fax, pricing and workflow were managed manually. Over the years, manual systems and processes struggled to support business growth and management made the decision to look for a locally supported and fully integrated system that would reduce wastage by improving

quoting and pricing accuracy and speeding-up ordering and assisting with managing work flow through the fabricator business. APL chose SoftTech over all other offerings available at that time and in 1985 a dos-based pricing system known as Alexsys was introduced. Twenty years on, Alexsys or V6 (its windows-based successor) has been installed in all of APL's reseller/manufacturing customer sites.

"SoftTech's V6, Saturn and PALS products are part of the engine-room of APL's window fabricator business - without these applications it would be difficult for these businesses to operate successfully."

Frex Vincent,
Fabricator Support Manager at APL

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SUCCESS STORIES

IMPROVED QUOTING AND ORDERING ACCURACY = MANY DOLLARS IN WASTAGE SAVED

Back in the old days, estimators used paper, pencil, tape measure, calculator and memory to provide customers with a quote. Estimators found salvation from manual quoting, calculators and reliance on memory initially with the installation of Soft Tech's Alexsys product which only required estimators to measure and enter the dimensions of profiles into a vast database containing every conceivable profile available. Alexsys would automatically calculate the optimum lengths of profiles required to complete a job and then generate a customer quote with much improved accuracy. Over the years, Alexsys has been redeveloped into **V6**, a windows-based application, which has been continually developed and improved jointly by APL and Soft Tech to ensure that estimators have the 'best' tools available to them.

In an industry where the old adage "measure twice and cut once" couldn't be more applicable, the need to get measurements and quotes right first time is imperative - the margin for error is nil and in the event the window joinery for a job doesn't fit, it becomes wastage. Soft Tech's **V6** product has saved APL and their customers thousands of dollars in wastage by improving the accuracy of the quoting, pricing and manufacturing process.

ELECTRONIC IMPORTATION OF ORDERS AND AUTOMATED SCHEDULING CREATE SIGNIFICANT WORKFLOW IMPROVEMENTS

Once a quote becomes a live order it is then electronically imported from the customers **V6** manufacturing system into APL's ERP software via SoftTech's **Saturn** product. Saturn can then provide online status information to the fabricator about their order. To further assist the workflow process

orders can also be imported into the fabricators Production and Labour Scheduling (PALS) software which schedules pre-production events and assists with management of production hours throughout the production process.

As far as Mr. Craig Vincent, CEO at APL is concerned "Soft Tech is a very good product" and he's confident that the continuation of the ongoing relationship with Soft Tech will produce positive results for NZ's window and door manufacturing industry for many more years to come. Soft Tech has accumulated over 20 years of industry knowledge and expertise and in Craig Vincent's view this has been distilled into industry leading software.

"PALS and V6 are both leading edge pieces of software for the Window and Door industry"

Craig Vincent,
CEO - APL

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HIGHLIGHTS

SUMMARY

APL needed to automate and streamline previously manual processes and workflows between their internal systems and that of their manufacturing customer's business. They also needed to improve the accuracy of quoting and pricing to reduce wastage and optimise the lengths of profiles used in jobs.

Over a number of years Soft Tech and APL have worked together on the development of Soft Tech's V6 software which has effectively automated the quotation, pricing and manufacturing process. Saturn and PALS combine to automate electronic importing of orders and scheduling of workflow within their customer's business.

OF MOST BUSINESS VALUE

- V6 - AUTOMATED QUOTING, PRICING □
□ & MANUFACTURING SYSTEM
- SATURN - ELECTRONIC ORDERING □
□ SYSTEM BETWEEN APL & FABRICATOR □
□ CUSTOMERS
- PALS - AUTOMATED SCHEDULING OF □
□ WORKFLOW WITHIN THE
□ FABRICATOR'S BUSINESS

KEY OUTCOMES

- THE AUTOMATIC CALCULATION OF □
□ OPTIMUM PROFILE REQUIREMENTS
□ HAS MEANT GREATER ACCURACY
□ AND LESS WASTAGE
- THE ELECTRONIC IMPORTATION OF □
□ ORDERS AND SCHEDULING HAS
□ CREATED WORKFLOW EFFICIENCIES
- APL AND SOFT TECH HAVE WORKED □
□ TOGETHER TO DEVELOP AND
□ IMPROVE SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES IN
□ NZ'S WINDOW MANUFACTURE AND
□ FABRICATION INDUSTRY

ABOUT ARCHITECTURAL PROFILES LTD (APL)

APL is a private company which started operating in 1971 and has grown to become New Zealand's leading window systems supplier of Altherm, First, Vantage, Smartwood and the Architectural Series of exterior joinery. APL incorporates an on-site aluminium extrusion plant (INEX) and surface finishing facilities (FINEX and Colourworks). The company's own distribution fleet services its network of over 80 fabricators nationwide. APL branch offices are maintained in Auckland and Christchurch. APL has also expanded into the Australian window and door industry under the Architectural Window Systems (AWS) and Vantage brands and has a network of over 125 manufacturers in that market who are also using Soft Tech's product offerings.

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