Keeping An Eye On The Factory

RFID-driven system tracks shop floor production down to each sewing machine.

BY BONNIE CHAN

The key to success for the apparel industry goes beyond mere survival and requires the ability to turn uncertainties the uncertainties of the industry into business opportunities. Most cross-border enterprises have to deliver production information in real time, handle JIT (Just-In-Time) production and manage business operation simultaneously. What's required is a reliable platform to fulfill all these aspects of the business.

MSC's RFID WIP Management System for the Apparel Industry uses state-of-the-art RFID technology to improve the operational flow. It collects and analyzes data during the entire production work flow on a real time basis. For the garment manufacturer RFID WIP Management System coordinates different work flow structures, business characteristics and provides a series of solutions. This specifically deals with common production problems encountered by spinning, weaving and garment enterprises.

The system rides on a common internet network infrastructure and has "JIT" and "unlimited regional restrictions" characteristics. The system can be used to obtain information about the production quantity of upstream and downstream sites on a real time basis. It not only traces the efficiency of each of the production lines, but it can also trace the performance of each sewing machine and each workers. When we take into account of quality issue, we can conduct upstream or downstream tracing, and detect the source of the problem on real time base.

The MSC RFID System runs on Microsoft's SQL Server 2005 which helps it handle large quantities of real time data. Manufacturers can also analyze and prepare reports on production capacities for entire production facilities. This not only assist management in supervising the performance of their production lines and individual workers, but also reduces time-wasting and helps expedite delivery schedules.

High Visibility and Transparency

The MSC RFID System standardizes, expedites and simplifies the production management process. Aligned with "Standard Allowable Minutes" (SAM), the system can improve production efficiency; reduce the cost of labor and help to fully utilize production facilities and labor. When IE and SAM are used jointly in the labor-intensive textile and apparel industry, many complicated activities may affect the result of production. The MSC system gives manufacturers high visibility and transparency of each worker or individual work process so that any matters can be handled immediately.

Keeping Up with the Market

✔ Effectively supervise outsourced working process to achieve swift production, short term delivery of goods, and quick response to customers' requests

✔ Utilize information technology to assist in the design and production process.

✔ Better utilize network infrastructure to connect to worldwide client.

✔ Thoroughly understand the operation, production facilities and production capacities of factories within Asia market and the global market.

✔ Understand upstream supply market conditions and downstream sales market conditions.

✔ Understand the market needs and customers' preferences trend, and to respond accordingly.

The "MSC RFID WIP Management System for the Apparel Industry" received the Microsoft 2006 award for Customer Experience in Greater China. The system also received the HKICT eBusiness (Product) Award – Gold Award in 2006.

According to the HK ICT judging panel, the system's "Elegant uses modern technology to handle traditionally intractable problems. Real time information shows who is sewing which bundle, allowing fast resolution of bottlenecks, a reduced WIP inventory, and the rapid tracing of quality issues to their source. Productivity is increased, and labour costs are significantly reduced, and valuable industrial engineering information can readily be obtained from the system."

http://www.msc-global.com