

Guardian Software/Tech Castings, Inc. Joint Effort Achieves Unprecedented Growth & Future Prospects

When it comes to turning around companies in crisis into flourishing ventures, Jeff Lantz knows his business. Developing strong partnerships, while establishing greater brand awareness in niche industries are strategies the owner and CEO of Tech Castings, Inc. stands behind.

“I’m used to taking risks. I was looking for a business to turn around that looked intriguing and came across Tech Castings. The foundry had been there for 30 years, but it had a couple of major issues. It only had one customer and then the owner passed away. I bought the business in December of 2011 and essentially restarted the foundry with no customers,” said Lantz.

Tech Castings, Inc. is an investment-casting foundry, producing high-quality castings for top companies in aerospace, manufacturing and turbine industries around the world. Located in Indiana, the foundry’s experienced staff of highly trained professionals manufactures vacuum and air melt alloy castings for aircraft engine and auxiliary power unit components, industrial gas turbines and for oil and gas production.

“At the time, I didn’t have any foundry knowledge whatsoever. It was critical that we were able to retain some key employees from the old foundry. We wouldn’t have been able to make this work if they hadn’t been willing to stick around,” Lantz admitted. “From that point on we knew we needed to work hard to regrow our customer base.”

Immediately after acquiring Tech Castings, Lantz and his team knew they would have to make a number of investments in the 25,000-square-foot-facility. “One of the first things we bought was an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system that was more of a machine shop-based system. We quickly realized we had to make a change because what we had acquired wasn’t the right system for us,” said Lantz.



Dip Operator Melissa Kuhn uses a Guardian Touch Screen Labor Collection Screen on tablets installed throughout the facility.

After doing some research, Lantz met with Guardian Software Systems in February of 2013. When the foundry’s inadequate ERP system server crashed nine months later, Tech Castings signed a contract with Guardian on November 12, 2013.

In a strategically planned, joint effort between Guardian and Tech Castings, the foundry went from no server

whirlwind and it was what we needed to have done in order for us to get our business back up and really running,” added Lantz.

Going live with the new Guardian Foundry Management System in record-time was critical in order for Tech Castings to demonstrate the foundry’s capabilities for a Fortune 500 aerospace company.

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to full training and complete Guardian Enterprise Version functionality, along with Guardian’s MES touch screen for the collection of Labor from iPads on the shop floor, in just 23 days.

“We were scrambling and causing Guardian to scramble to pull together the server specs, get it ordered, get the software installed and get training done within a two-week time period. It was a

“We received a score from that customer that placed us in the mid to upper tier of an overall foundry. I think they were shocked at our technical capability. The infrastructure and the knowledge that we have is certainly not what they expected from a foundry out of Shirley, Indiana,” said Lantz. “We knew we could bring value and make this a successful business. We grew 100% the first year and we’re on track to grow 250 to 300% in the coming year.”

Beyond an aggressive implementation process, key compelling features provided by Guardian Software that empower Tech Castings to meet their goals

include serial number traceability, as well as a touch screen tablet environment.

“We have a lot of quality metrics that we are required to capture because of the aerospace work that we do. We were capturing on paper before and the whole goal was to go paperless as much as possible. The only way to do that is with the tablet environment. So we’re capturing all those metrics now on the tablet,” said Lantz. “The ability for us to track not just the data that we talk about so much, but the fact we can also track data by serial number, because of the aerospace application, is absolutely a necessity.”

In the near future, the team at Tech Castings will continue to expand their use of scheduling management and demand planning tools.

“What has helped us go to the next level is the analytical capability that Guardian’s software offers us. It has changed the way we do business. As we continue to grow, that will certainly be a key feature for us in a very short period

of time. At the end of the day, we’ll be able to control our costs because we’ll be able to do more with less. Demand planning cycle, statistical analysis around the

processes we have and the data we’re capturing – those are the things that will really start to differentiate us in the marketplace,” added Lantz.



Jeff Lantz, owner of Tech Castings, Inc., creates a Casting Record in the Guardian Software Engineering Module.