Case Study

High Tech – Lighting
Helping YESCO Light Up the Sky

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Since 1920, YESCO has played an important role in the sign making industry. The company’s signs range from simple “way-finding” plaques to towering spectacles that spring to life in dazzling spectrums of color, motion, animation and video.

“If you think of the big, fancy signs in Las Vegas—that’s the stuff we build,” said Kurt Gunnell, YESCO engineer.

After 94 years in business, YESCO remains an innovative and energetic company with out-of-this-world sign and lighting projects occurring in global markets. “Our footprint has definitely expanded,” says Gunnell. “We now have new customers as far away as Europe and Russia.”

As YESCO continues to evolve, expand and change, one challenge stayed the same: the need to customize signs to meet each customer’s unique requirements. “Every customer wants to make something fancy that stands out,” said Gunnell. “Our inherent challenge is to try to standardize as much as we can, but still have the flexibility for customers who want something unique.”

Complicating the customization process was the fact that YESCO relied on Excel spreadsheets, prohibiting engineering and operation teams from sharing accurate information in real time; this in turn led to frustrating versioning control problems, product errors and costly product launch delays, especially with unique sizes that constantly required major revisions.

“When you make a new product, you have to manufacture everything from the circuit board level through the cabinet and structure,” said Gunnell. “Making those signs is a little more sophisticated than I think people realize.”

Without a robust product lifecycle management (PLM) solution, Gunnell realized synchronization among team members was failing, leading to missed revenue targets due to shipping delays.

SOLUTIONS

Gunnell turned to Arena PLM BOMControl to formalize engineering change request and engineering change order (ECO) processes with an intuitive cloud-based solution. The solution eliminated the time-consuming complications of managing unwieldy change order packages.

In addition, Arena reduced design confusion by removing the collaboration barrier. This revision-controlled product information repository facilitated synchronization across the dispersed supply chain.”We definitely needed a place for the engineers to work together and keep all the specs and documents, files, drawings, etc. in one place,” said Gunnell. “It is very nice to have that accessible anywhere—if I am at home or wherever.”
As a one-man PLM show, Gunnell needed a solution that was intuitive and painless to integrate. He raves about Arena’s ease of implementation and how the solution helped the company’s design culture evolve from a “sheet of paper to a full-blown PLM system.” “The fact that we are actually creating a BOM that has been certified by the engineers, released properly and has all the documentation necessary was important,” said Gunnell. “Arena increased our quality tremendously.”

According to Gunnell, BOMControl helped YESCO reduce shipping delays dramatically by providing a place for quality documentation to reside in a centralized system that was highly controlled. “Now production people in the board assembly group work closely with the engineers to make sure they have the right product and the right bill of materials before we proceed,” said Gunnell. “This helps us avoid product delays.”

He concluded, “With BOMControl, engineers know what part they are supposed to manufacture so they can get the parts pulled and produced quickly. And if they have any questions, they can go back to the bill of materials and check. So, Arena is definitely helping us get to a quicker turnaround because everyone knows their role in the manufacturing process.”

Find out how Arena can help you achieve success and take your company from chaos to calm. Sign up for a demo at www.arenasolutions.com/plm-demo