

## *When It Absolutely Positively has to be there!*

### **Tier One automotive parts supplier Autoneum uses COLLECT® for Epicor to achieve automotive certification.**

Autoneum is the global market and technology leader in acoustic and thermal management solutions for vehicles. As a partner for light vehicle manufacturers around the world, Autoneum provides multifunctional components and technologies for noise and heat protection and thereby increases a vehicle's comfort and value. Based on its long-standing expertise and unique technological know-how, Autoneum develops and produces systems and components for the engine bay, underbody, interior floor and body-in-white of vehicles.

Autoneum's customers are the leading automobile manufacturers in the key markets of Europe, North America, South America and Asia. Global presence and being close to the customer is not only a key success factor but also a crucial competitive advantage. Accordingly, the company, which is headquartered in Winterthur, Switzerland, operates and conducts research and development on a global scale: Autoneum is represented at around 50 locations in over 20 countries and has a workforce of more than 11,000 employees worldwide.



The automotive supply chain is a very demanding marketplace for any manufacturer, especially in today's global market. Autoneum is what is known as a Tier I supplier, meaning their products go directly to the assembly line. Failure to supply deliveries in a timely manner would result in production stopping and costs thousands of dollars for every minute of lost production. To this end, Autoneum has located facilities around the world to be close to global production sites.

The automotive industry also deploys perhaps the highest level of electronic automation. From EDI transmission of orders and shipment details to the actual labeling of product with the correct bar-coded label, Suppliers must be “up to the challenge” says Domonkos Gaspar, Autoneum’s IT Program Director.

Going further, Mr. Gaspar explained the auto industry’s theory on data. Essentially their desire is for all information to be recorded and transmitted electronically. Writing down part numbers or quantities all are opportunities for error. Bar coded labelling and transactions were the answer to this requirement, so they turned to Epicor who is their ERP provider for a solution. Manufacturing Systems Corp has been an Epicor partner for years in providing bar-code solutions from simple receiving and shipping transactions to complete Warehouse Management solutions. Autoneum’s customers, the OEM’s among others, BMW and Ford are demanding the implementation of such a system to assure data accuracy. The requirement is a little more demanding in automotive in that the supplier needs to be able to trace their goods back to the original raw material batch and supplier if required. In a manual system that is a lot of typing and error prone. With COLLECT® for Epicor, this data is automatically captured via a bar-code scan and transmitted as required

The initial request was to implement COLLECT® in a plant in China. Manufacturing Systems Corp along with Epicor consultants were on site, and the initial implementation was completed within a 3 month period. This location was also in the process of a new implementation of Epicor, so a daunting task. During the 3 month period, MSC personnel made two visits, a two week intense install and training session followed by a one week go live. It just so happened that Manufacturing Systems Corp., had Chinese speaking personnel employed so a complete translation to Chinese was provided which certainly helped in training. For this location everything was new. New hardware and infrastructure was installed, software loaded and linked to a new ERP instance, network configured and users trained.

A successful pilot on dedicated training system was conducted to test every transaction and its impact on the Epicor ERP. Manufacturing Systems Corp personnel were on site for both the pilot and go – live to assure quick response. The functions on the handheld were configured to individual user groups which simplified training new users. A few minor adjustments to labelling were made to eliminate any potential errors and they were ready to go live. Incoming raw materials are scanned upon purchase order receipt and, approved by QC and released to stock. As production is scheduled materials are pulled from stock, batch numbers captured and consumed by the manufacturing process. Upon completion of manufacturing new batch numbers are created for the finished good and it is moved to stock. Based upon the customer’s schedule outgoing shipments are picked, provided the correct customer specified label and scanned to confirm they are being placed on the correct outgoing pallet. Orders are then confirmed and electronically shipped. This shipment data is provided via an EDI transaction to the customer per their specifications.

The next step was the critical audit by BMW to assure compliance with their requirements in this area. This is based on a standard known as LOPA, which all suppliers to BMW must pass. Failure to pass this audit can have serious consequences. The plant passed with flying colors and is now in full compliance as well as gaining productivity improvements by automating past manual processes.



Based upon their experience implementing COLLECT Autoneum's management team then set out to create a plan for all of their operations throughout Asia. As part of a 7 month process, key functions and business issues were identified and a template for implementing this standard throughout Asia was developed.

The template was then implemented in two additional locations, one in Thailand and second China site. Many more plants are lined up in Autoneum's ambitious roll-out plan across Asia. Thailand was a very tight timeframe and Ford set an aggressive date for the audit and the team needed to react quickly. Software was loaded remotely onto the test and production servers, so when our consultant arrived in Bangkok, we could immediately start in working with local staff and the Epicor consultants. We are able to piggy back on the knowledge gained in our first install, so the system was ready for test in a short time. Users were trained, the system tested for results and Thailand was ready for give live, literally within a few weeks. In this case the local team with assistance from Epicor consultants were able to manage the go-live on their own, and they passed the audit, this time with Ford a few weeks later.



So what is the real value of COLLECT to the customer? We asked Domonkos to speak about his experience and value to Autoneum. “MSC’s warehouse management product met our requirements entirely. We were able to implement the solution without and custom development. Its integration with Epicor’s Iscala ERP solution, which we use, is seamless and is delivered standard with the product. These very important in terms of securing the expected ROI. Product excellence coupled by professional and very customer focused consulting services, convinced Autoneum to make the MSC Warehouse Management Solution our corporate standard. We are now in the process of rolling it out in our 10+ production facilities in Business Group Asia”.

## About Manufacturing Systems Corporation

Manufacturing Systems Corporation supply chain execution solutions provide advanced inventory and labor tracking, warehouse management and shipping applications that help manufacturers and distributors track and optimize inventory movement and labor utilization in the warehouse and on the shop floor, provide better customer service and improve productivity. MSC addresses the needs of industries, such as consumer goods where distributors must meet the unique requirements of big retail customers, as well as automotive and medical device manufacturers that have advanced logistics and regulatory requirements. For more information, please visit [www.mfgsyscorp.com](http://www.mfgsyscorp.com) or email [rдетtinger@mfgsyscorp.com](mailto:rдетtinger@mfgsyscorp.com).