

How Flowlens Helped JCS Nuclear Solutions Achieve Digital Transformation

JCS Nuclear Solutions is a manufacturer of bespoke radiation detection and shielding equipment and was looking to change its internal systems after the retirement of the company bookkeeper triggered a review of tools and processes. Specifically, they were looking at embarking on a digital transformation path that linked both the accounting system and the MRP system to improve overall company efficiency. This case study follows the journey towards digital transformation.

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Oliver Caunt, MD, JCS Nuclear Solutions.



The challenges faced at JCS Nuclear Solutions

Like many SMEs, JCS Nuclear Solutions was operated by making use of several Excel spreadsheets. This system worked but was very inefficient for a number of reasons.

This inefficiency partly came about because information is often duplicated in these types of Excel-based systems. When the time came to generate reports, the process was tedious and fraught with errors. In addition to this, the information was outdated, rendering it difficult to use for making both tactical and strategic business decisions. The obvious remedy to both of these problems was a cloud-based accounting solution and a CRM/MRP system.

“We were operating the best part of 15 spreadsheets that we needed to touch on a regular basis. All of this was mounting up to a lot of time every week. Under our accountants advice, we started looking at more modern systems, specifically Xero, to do the accounting and bookkeeping for the company, and that became the natural progression to look at the bolt-on for the CRM and MRP system.” – Oliver Caunt, MD, JCS Nuclear Solutions.

Embracing digital transformation

While the problem of outdated and duplicated information was a major concern, the retirement of the company accountant jump-started the [digital transformation process](#) as it left a void in the business and created an opportunity to change how things were done.

To this end, JCS Nuclear Solutions decided to leverage the expertise of their existing external accounting firm [Horsfield & Smith](#) to help plot the path towards digital transformation. Embracing cloud-based systems was understood as the required solution, but the optimum system still needed to be determined.

During this review process, Xero was recommended by Horsfield & Smith as the accounting system due to their extensive experience in successfully implementing Xero in other, similar situations.

To choose the best cloud MRP system, JCS Nuclear Solutions began by identifying the key requirements of the system. This was achieved by getting all stakeholders in the business to identify the individual pain points in their day-to-day activities. It was discovered that time was being wasted on duplicating data through the numerous spreadsheets.

Once the requirements were clearly defined JCS shortlisted three packages that could potentially meet the requirements. Flowlens was ultimately chosen as the [MRP system](#) due to its user-friendly interface and combination of sales CRM, inventory management, manufacturing and invoicing tools that linked with Xero accounts.

“We performed a review, then met with the client and existing staff to see what reports they produced and where we could see possible long-term time savings and efficiencies by bringing on board cloud-based software.” Mark Tooby, Outsourcing Manager, Horsfield & Smith

Ensuring stakeholder buy-in

Whenever a new MRP system is implemented, one of the most important factors is to get buy-in from all stakeholders involved. Skipping this step will most likely result in a failed implementation due to employees not being convinced the system can improve efficiency. Ultimately this results in employees falling back on existing systems they know work, regardless of how inefficient. However, with JCS, the team was well aware of the fact that digital transformation was needed.

The selection process involved the entire team being able to voice their opinions and be part of selecting the final MRP system. This ensured buy-in as employees felt they had a voice in the decision and could see first-hand how their pain points could be addressed while also understanding that some compromise would be required to implement the MRP system.

Xero & Flowlens

One of the key decision factors when choosing an MRP system at JCS Nuclear Solutions was its ability to integrate with the accounting system, Xero.

One of the pain points for the accounting firm, Horsfield & Smith, was retrieving information in a timely fashion. In the old system, there was always a delay between requesting the information and receiving it. More often than not the information would need to be extracted from multiple spreadsheets then collated into a form that could be sent to the accounting firm. When it came time to integrate Flowlens with Xero, the process was seamless, according to Mark Tooby.



"Because Flowlens is real-time it allows not only the staff at JCS to get the information live, we have access to that as well. 'It just worked as far as I'm concerned as a dream.

It connected to Xero perfectly and everything seemed to move along very, very smoothly." – Mark Tooby, Outsourcing Manager, Horsfield & Smith

In addition to this, only certain people had access to the spreadsheets or knew how to get relevant information from them. With Flowlens, Horsfield & Smith could directly access information in real-time without necessarily needing to contact someone at JCS Nuclear Solutions. This dramatically improved efficiency and eliminated a lot of time-wasting.

Onboarding Digital Tools

To properly implement the MRP system, JCS Nuclear Solutions opted to test the software thoroughly before attempting live implementation. This trial served as an excellent method to train staff on how the system worked in a way that would not negatively affect day-to-day business operations.

In addition to this hands-on training, Flowlens has a very detailed knowledge base that can be used for training purposes. This negates the need for creating new, detailed training manuals and procedures, as a simple web link can refer an employee to the relevant information on how to use a certain Flowlens process.

"We had early buy-in. We knew we needed to modernise. If you understand what the outcomes are and what the data is that you need, you can learn to change your operations. The knowledge base on the Flowlens website is really good. The impact of being able to access real-time information for all employees throughout the business has been immediate." – Oliver Caunt, MD, JCS Nuclear Solutions

Benefits of implementing digital tools

One of the key advantages of the joined up system from a management perspective is the ability to create a dashboard with customised information like sales orders, enquiries, and enquiries conversions, which can be displayed in real-time giving management a snapshot of the current state of the business.

"So Flowlens has widgets like "Show me everything that's going to be required in the next four weeks." And so we have a report that's active and live that we can see on the dashboard of, "Okay, well, this is what we're expecting in the next four weeks.

That's had an immediate impact in terms of, we can all see what's going on at the same time and we can actually, so we're not having to query everybody, "Where are we at? Where are we with that?" So we know where we are. It's great.

My reporting to the board every month used to take me a good day or two just in terms of compiling that data. And now these are reports that are either live widgets or just stuff that I can just download as a PDF and just send around to everybody. But we don't even do that, we just have a live review now. So Flowlens is fantastic for that."

Oliver Caunt would recommend Flowlens to any SME that 'makes stuff' and needs to maintain traceability. The combination of Flowlens, Horsfield & Smith and Xero has helped JCS Nuclear Solutions achieve digital transformation at a time of change within the company and overall:

"The impact has been nothing but positive at all levels within the operation of the company. Having your finger on the pulse of that is information that I didn't really appreciate how valuable it was until we started using it. And now it's the first thing I look at every day."

Visit JCS Nuclear Solutions: <https://johncaunt.com/>
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