



KOYO & Datacraft Solutions e-Kanban Make Huge Impact

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Datacraft Solutions e-Kanban Makes Huge Impact on KOYO

PR9.NET September 29, 2005 - Koyo is a very lean organization; they were solely internally relying on visual signals to trigger supplier replenishment of consumed inventory. Koyo originally signed up with Datacraft Solutions to help manage the flow of some 3000 faxes per day that were being sent to 30 of key suppliers on kanban. Management of this volume of cards was unwieldy and error prone. Although the visual system was maintaining the flow of inventory, it was only at great administrative expense. Koyo's first phase was to bring in Signum, the e-kanban product of Datacraft Solutions, and migrate the manual faxbans onto an electronic kanban platform that included bar code scanning of inventory consumption and automatically conveying that kanban signal to suppliers. The immediate benefit of this transition was to relieve buyer planners of a significant workload while keeping the internal process improvements transparent to their suppliers so as not to require their involvement.

After several months in production, a new Materials Manager, Mark Mekanik, who had come from a more traditional manufacturing environment, was hired to oversee the raw material and purchased parts warehouse. Very early on he learned that it was impossible to get answers to the seemingly simple questions of:

- How much inventory of part number X do I have on hand?
- How much is on order?
- When will it arrive?

These were questions that were easily answered in his ERP experience but seemed quite elusive in this flow oriented kanban replenishment environment.

Mark immediately initiated a project that would integrate Signum, his electronic kanban system, with his ERP system, Syteline. The goal of this project was to develop a "perpetual inventory system" that would provide answers to the questions he was seeking, while not disrupting the value he was getting from his electronic kanban platform. Koyo went live with their integrated systems in early 2005.

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