Electroplaters benefit from latest version of 'Metfin' software

Developed specifically for the metal finishing industry and progressively developed over the last decade, the latest version of 'Metfin' production tracking and administration support software – from Birmingham based Sumari Business Systems – is proving particularly invaluable to electroplaters facing increasingly tighter quality and legislative demands.

Originally a DOS based system, Metfin has been upgraded over the past couple of years to the Microsoft Windows™ operating system, which enables it to be applied more widely and to embrace additional features. Sumari, together with its partner company – software development specialists, Sapphire, based in Romford – have produced two standard Windows™ based versions of Metfin: one for the smaller plating operation and the other for larger operations that have to deal with the rigorous requirements of 'NADCAP' audits, for example. NADCAP stands for the National Aerospace and Defence Contractors Accreditation Programme and is a global aerospace industry supported initiative, accreditation to which is vital for a manufacturer or subcontractor supplying international aerospace customers.

Help with 'NADCAP'

A typical Metfin customer in the latter category is Stainless Plating Ltd, Sheffield, which has been running Metfin software since 1995, but needed to upgrade to the latest Windows™ version to prepare for a NADCAP audit.

The company recently underwent a second NADCAP audit. The results proved so positive, says managing director, Brenda Grove, that SPL's future NADCAP audits are no longer required on an annual basis. Stainless Plating (despite the 'Stainless' title) offers 14 different metal finishing processes including anodising and phosphating, in addition to plating.

'Metfin' is bar-code enabled – any manual entry can be by bar code, including raising delivery notes and job tracking.

Brenda has recently been elected chair of the Metal Finishing Association, and the company is a member of the Surface Engineering Associations IPPC club, which assists with the implementation of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control legislation – another requirement with which Metfin software can be helpful.

Stainless Plating currently treats effluents using a number of different methods including reclamation, ion exchange and chemical treatments. All of these have the aim of reducing pollutant levels to enable water to be discharged or reused internally. At present Stainless Plating are able to meet discharge limits but are aware of the potential of further legislation.

Commented Brenda: "Metfin software is used to organise and plan all of the company's administration, and production operations. With the facility to store all parts (including photographs of individual parts), and all finishes and operations, the entering of batch cards is simplified. The benefit of controlling the full process from booking in, right through to invoicing, meant that only minor modifications were required to accommodate the requirements of the NADCAP procedures."

Maintaining an edge

Another satisfied Metfin customer, Nu-Pro Surface Treatments Ltd, based in Stroud, believes that the latest Windows™ version gives it a definite edge in the complex and highly regulated aerospace business.

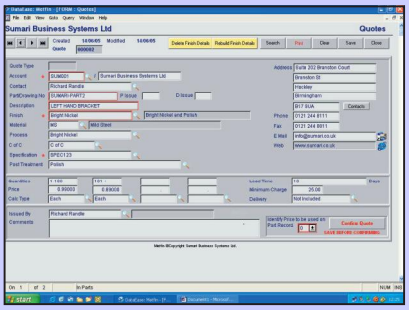
Says Nu-Pro's process manager, Martin Trigg-Hogarth: "The key elements are the structure of the database being 'right' for the aerospace business, that quality control has been built into the system and not added as a bolt on package. This has allowed the implementation of the requirements of such quality systems as NADCAP, without great increases in the administration function allowing us to keep costs down.

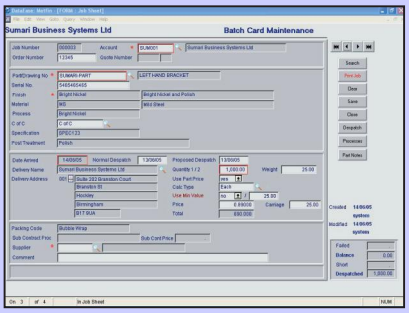
"Another key element is the fact that the system is bar code capable using very low cost systems, these have reduced time taken in the non-value added functions such as despatch and inspection. If the industry were to develop more bar coding systems this would reduce costs with the industry greatly, this is something that Nu-Pro Surface Treatments is pushing for.

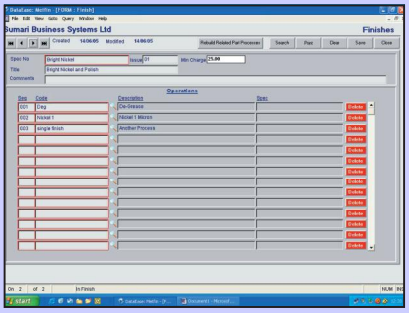
"However the main benefit of the system is that it is flexible which means as customer demands change the system can be changed to meet these demands in a timely and cost effective manner.

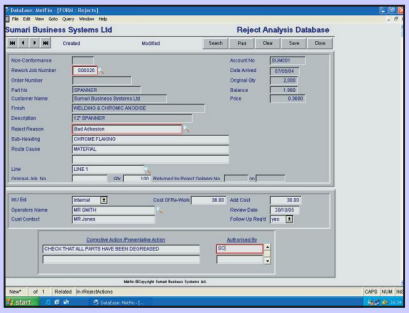
"With Metfin the flexible nature of the system based on a solid core means that the system is 'future proofed' and will be able to operate within the company for many years which once more is a cost saving as the training costs are reduced."

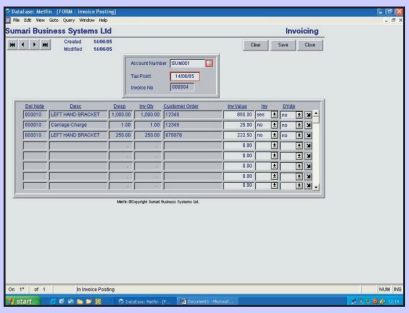
Continued on page 46.











Metfin software provides quick and easy production information about plating plant throughput – with job tracking through individual plating operations – and streamlines related administration processes, including the creation of quotes, job cards, quality documentation, despatch notes and purchase orders.

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Continued from page 44.

Basic elements of Metfin

- Creation of quotes, with photographs of components and links to CAD drawings.
- Production of multiple or single item job cards and despatch notes.
- Invoice production, with links to separate accounts packages if required.
- Storage of finish/process information.
- Creation of purchase orders to suppliers.
- Stock control facility.
- Rejects logging facility.
- Storage of comprehensive customer and delivery information.
- Ability to tailor operating parameters to individual user requirements.
- Full national consultancy and user support service.

Tel: 0121 244 8111. www.metfin.co.uk** or **www.sumari.co.uk

Enquiry Card No 117

Part of Stainless Plating's facility in Sheffield. The company has adopted the latest Windows™ based version of 'Metfin' developed by Sumari Business Systems and software specialists Sapphire. Metfin is used to organise and plan all of the company's administration and production operations, and can store and track information on all parts (including photographs of individual parts). The system proved invaluable for the company's recent 'NADCAP' audit.

Mini machine for cleaning stainless steel welds

Fine welds on stainless steel components can be cleaned effectively using this latest small, state-of-the-art machine launched recently by stainless steel specialist Anopol.

Robust and compact, the 'Minikleen' operates electrochemically to eliminate discolouration from welded areas – thus avoiding the need to use any abrasive materials. The treated areas are subsequently scratch-free and less prone to crevice corrosion attack.

In the same way as the larger Anopol machine – the 'Weldkleen' – the smaller unit has a torch fitted with a non-scratch absorbent pad, which is continuously fed with a recommended cleaning fluid. This removes the need to dip the end of the torch repeatedly into a chemical cleaning fluid before application, speeding up the weld cleaning operation.

The Minikleen also doubles up as a marking machine. Company logos, part numbers, etc can be applied to a range of metals using readily available photo-resist templates. Where only marking of components is required, Anopol can also supply a dedicated machine. ***Tel: 0121 632 6888.*** *www.anopol.co.uk*

Enquiry Card No 118

New 'QUV' controller has computerised data logging

The well established 'QUV' accelerated weathering tester from Q-Panel Lab Products , now features a new controller, designed to be even more functional and easy to use. Every QUV now features:

- *Storage of 10 different test cycles. Commonly used ISO and ASTM exposure cycles are already pre-programmed to save time.*
- *Built-in computerised data logging. Quick and easy connections are now standard for attaching one or more QUVs to a PC or to a local area network (LAN). The user interface of the company's new free software allows easy data logging, in either tabular or strip chart format.*
- *Automatic lab temperature sensing. When any fault occurs, the lab temperature is automatically recorded and displayed to aid in troubleshooting.*

The QUV has been used to test the weatherability of coatings for nearly three decades. It allows companies to simulate the damage caused by short wave UV. Alternating cycles of UV, moisture and high temperature are employed to simulate the effects of sunlight, rain and dew/humidity.

Since the first electromechanical QUV was introduced nearly three decades ago, the QUV has undergone several technological advancements, including 'Solar Eye Irradiance Control', to ensure that the instrument remains at the leading edge of accelerated weathering testing. However, Q-Panel Lab Products has never discontinued a model and still supports all versions.

The QUV is easy to install, easy to use, and is almost maintenance free. It operates completely automatically, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. ***Tel: 01204 861616.*** *www.q-panel.com*

Enquiry Card No 119