

Sun Chemicals General Printing Ink (GPI)

- **ISO 9000 registration secured \$6 m of sales from key customers**
- **Customer complaints have decreased by 75% between 1997 and 2001**
- **Internal and external audits ensure consistency of quality throughout the entire process as well as inform management of quality issues**
- **BSI provides invaluable guidance and training in order to smoothly changeover to the new ISO 9000: 2000 standard**

The Organisation

Sun Chemicals GPI is the largest ink producer in the world with headquarters in North Lake, USA. The Cleveland, Tennessee branch employs 26 people and produces packaging ink.

All branches are independently ISO 9000 certified, and the Cleveland, Tennessee branch started ISO 9000 preparations with another registrar in 1994 and achieved registration in 1997. It then transferred to BSI.

The Issues

The main driver for ISO 9000 registration was that key customers required the company to get certified. A second motivation was that the company who previously owned the branch was certified as well and recommended registration to ISO 9000.

The Benefits

ISO 9000 registration resulted in customers having more confidence in consistent quality and secured \$6 million in sales from key customers. They require consistency, which must be maintained in order not to lose business. It is therefore a key requirement of the branch's business, and is seen as a main advantage of ISO 9000.

Customer complaints decreased by 75% between 1997 and 2001, with none being received in 2000. ISO 9000 helps to control and investigate all customer complaints, resulting in improved customer confidence and ensures that all processes are performed under controlled conditions to produce a consistent and high quality product.

BSI Case Study on the Benefits of ISO 9000 Registration

At the beginning of the registration process, staff's views of the new ISO 9000 quality management system varied, with some viewing it as additional work. This has changed and now most perceive the system as helpful in avoiding mistakes because there are clear procedures to follow. Better documentation of procedures resulted in lower employee mistakes, less customer complaints, and improved operational effectiveness and day-to-day-work.

Employee training has also improved due to improved training material. Employees now have the training and documentation they need to more efficiently perform their job functions. Moreover, the system increased employee awareness on the impact of their job functions on the quality of the final product.

Most suppliers to the company are ISO 9000 certified which has resulted in better relationships.

The ISO 9000 quality management system provides consistency in operations and overall quality, which resulted in increased knowledge of job responsibilities and increased knowledge of customer requirements across the organisation. In addition, increased knowledge of procedures has lowered quality costs due to reduced errors in manufacturing, quality control and shipping, e.g., the introduction of a new batch card for product identification and traceability from order through to shipment of the products, and the documentation has prevented errors in processes e.g., labelling.

BSI's Role

The Cleveland, Tennessee branch of Sun Chemicals GPI was previously using another registrar but switched to BSI due to its better service, based on recommendations from other branches. The company has a good working relationship with BSI - the auditors are very helpful because they are not only concerned with auditing but also suggest opportunities for improvement to the business. Moreover, many new ideas have been created with the support of BSI, and its personnel are always available and easy to contact to discuss problems and answer questions.

The internal and external audits ensure consistency of quality throughout the entire process as well as informing management of quality issues. BSI is also providing invaluable guidance and training in order to smoothly changeover to the new ISO 9000:2000 standard.

About the System

The Cleveland, Tennessee branch of Sun Chemicals GPI uses a specific computer programme called QMIS to administer ISO 9000. This programme is used by all the US branches to share best practice in training and procedures, as demonstrated by the fact that since the branch's initial registration, two external audits have resulted in zero action requests.