



Harbec Shaves 50% off of Tooling Design Time

The Situation

“Everything else we have tried had serious limitations, but OneSpace Collaboration let us target key elements of our product development process to achieve clear, bottom-line results. We not only save money but our customers are happier.”

Bob Bechtold, CEO, Harbec Plastics



Harbec's Profile:

Harbec is a supplier of plastic injection-molded parts. They embrace a full-service business model, offering everything from initial concept modeling to advanced production



The Challenges

- Work with and service customers with multiple CAD data formats

The Solutions

- OneSpace Collaboration

The Results

Harbec was interested in OneSpace Collaboration to help them work with multiple CAD formats. It accomplished that and more. Today OneSpace Collaboration

- Increases input early on in the design process
- Reduces tooling design time by 50%
- Reduces rework and travel costs
- Improves customer service and increased competitive advantage
- Helps expand the company's customer base

tooling, production injection-molding, secondary manufacturing and assembly processes. Harbec is currently expanding its business to new markets.

Harbec differentiates itself from its competition by leveraging technology to boost turnaround times and maintain high standards of quality. Harbec has been instrumental in trying to develop improved standards and processes for use within the engineering community.



Founded 25 years ago, Harbec was in a plastic injection molding class of its own. One of the first companies to use CAD/CAM technology, Harbec produced faster, more complete prototypes than their competitors. But as that technology became commonplace, Harbec faced a new challenge: serving customers regardless of what CAD/CAM system they used.

To overcome this challenge, they became a member of the Open Supplier Integration Center. This organization, comprised of companies like Ford, Kodak, and McDonnell Douglas, investigated how to improve exchanging design data with suppliers. Unfortunately, this organization dissolved after just three years.

Then Harbec tried to use Microsoft NetMeeting software along with a 3D design viewer but results were unsatisfactory. "It really didn't overcome our challenge of working with data from multiple CAD systems," said Bob Bechtold, CEO of Harbec.

"We ran into firewall problems when trying to share 3D data with our clients and suppliers," said Bechtold. "In fact, the need to share 3D data was so important, that we would sometimes send a laptop to a client with instructions on how to view the data with the laptop. We assumed that technologies like application sharing and viewing could be used to solve our challenge of sharing 3D CAD data. We quickly found out that these technologies were not designed to overcome our challenge."

They also tried using CAD data translators like IGES and STEP, but they found that parts of the CAD data got lost or changed when models were translated by these methods.

So Harbec continued to wait for a universal CAD language that would enable information to be shared easily between companies.

Recently Harbec tried OneSpace Collaboration from CoCreate. Once they started using it, they found that they could share design data easily with their customers, regardless of either companies' CAD software. Since adopting OneSpace technology, Harbec has realized some additional benefits that they did not expect:

OneSpace Collaboration made it easy to bring in additional people early on in the design process. Since more input was

discussed earlier, costly rework was reduced and the overall design improved. They reduced face-to-face meetings and their tooling design time by 50%, which also condensed costs and project time.

"OneSpace Collaboration adds huge savings to a project," says Bechtold. "For example, retooling can easily cost up to \$100,000 and this increases our customer's frustration. Customers see the value of working with us. We save them money and deliver faster than our competitors."

With one client, Harbec used OneSpace technology to design a test stand for a germ-sensing device. Harbec collaborated with the client to design a product that could be manufactured.

"Using OneSpace technology helped us and our client to understand the tooling options we could use," says Bechtold. "This is vital; misunderstanding in tooling can cause issues which can take weeks and cost tens of thousands of dollars to resolve."

In another example, Harbec used OneSpace Collaboration to redesign a fuel delivery system for a client by replacing a metal ring and gasket with a single molded part. The new part reduced the manufacturing time and costs of the fuel delivery system while removing any possibility for a leak. "We held a OneSpace Collaboration meeting to go over this recommended change to the design, and in just 30 minutes, our client approved the new design," says Bechtold. "Before we started to use OneSpace Collaboration, it would have taken a week to schedule a face-to-face meeting to review a design change like this for approval."

OneSpace technology has become central to Harbec's growth strategy. The company had previously offered services regionally. But thanks to tools like OneSpace Collaboration, they can reach customers or partners efficiently regardless of their location.

"We originally thought that OneSpace Collaboration would just help us with our ability to work with multiple CAD models. It has opened new opportunities and made us more competitive. How many software applications can deliver that much?" concludes Bechtold.

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