

GLOBAL TALK



SYSPRO clinches its largest-ever Asia-Pacific site

SYSPRO giving back to the community



SYSPRO USA enables evolutionary progress with PragmaVision





CEO's message

The people behind the product – Learning with SYSPRO



Phil Duff – CEO, SYSPRO

Following on from the celebrations which surrounded SYSPRO's 30th anniversary, we have chosen to finish this eventful year by looking at all the learning opportunities that abound in the SYSPRO community.

I'm sure you would all agree that it is rewarding to be part of the learning university that is SYSPRO. Our software has a broad scope – and yet, the software on its own is not enough. Only with the people and support behind the software can we harness the power and potential of the SYSPRO software. It's all about the amazing feats which can be achieved when technology is combined with the human spirit.

That is why SYSPRO maintains a Certification Program for our resellers as well as the Support

Zone on the SYSPRO website. It's also the reason that we encourage our customers to elect a Seeker of Value.

SYSPRO Certification

Louise Thompson, Product Marketing Director of SYSPRO, and her team have put a great deal of effort into establishing the SYSPRO Certification program, and I'd like to thank them for all their hard work.

SYSPRO Certification is a uniform worldwide process for individuals to become certified within the SYSPRO environment, providing a consistent level of education and measure of the consultant's knowledge in the SYSPRO environment.

To achieve a SYSPRO Certification demonstrates commitment and a high standard of knowledge attained. The student has to pass challenging and complex exams to demonstrate their understanding and expertise. SYSPRO Certification empowers resellers and individuals with a tangible competitive advantage. We offer a choice of certifications to accommodate the various functions within the SYSPRO community: Support; Implementer; and Developer.

From a customer perspective, you have the confidence of knowing that our consultants have been tested against defined standards, methods, working practices and levels of knowledge. SYSPRO Certification guarantees you access to a team of experts, which culminates in the reassurance of quality and consistency.

The Support Zone

Our Support Zone provides a secure area where detailed product and support information can be published for the benefit of the SYSPRO community. It's a window into the world of SYSPRO product development and support, empowering you to make the most of your investment.

The content on the Support Zone includes product feature demos specific to certain product releases, training material and tutorials, Interwise recordings, download patches, support documentation and regional information. And that's just the tip of the iceberg, so make sure you check it out!

Seeker of Value

The Seeker of Value is a person or team, usually in top management positions, who 'sponsors' the progress of implementation in the client company. The Seeker's role is to optimize

the value of ERP throughout the company and to communicate the shared vision of the organization, the role of the new system and structures to employees. Their commitment is critical to drive consensus and to oversee the entire lifecycle of the implementation.

The role of the Seeker of Value combines the facets of the architect, the translator and the coach in relation to the implementation team. This team is composed of a mix of consultants and designers from SYSPRO and the Value Added Reseller, as well as the internal staff.

The initiatives mentioned here are just some of the ways in which SYSPRO demonstrates its ongoing commitment to the product and to continuous learning and improvement. So, please make the most of them and keep on learning! ❖

Phil Duff
CEO
SYSPRO





SYSPRO: Giving back to the Community



All over the world, SYSPRO takes pride in becoming involved in the welfare of both our staff members and the community. In South Africa, a team led by Financial Director Rodney Marais and Human Resource Manager Pauline Isaac has embarked on a number of projects over the years. Some of these initiatives include the building of houses for impoverished people by SYSPRO staff, sponsoring a number of organizations, either through direct sponsorship or with donations, and graduate trainee programs.

In the US, SYSPRO's high-industry profile draws attention to our Orange County location and reinforces the area's reputation as a high tech center. In addition, as SYSPRO is one of the most highly honored software companies in the US, the awards we win bring recognition to our US headquarters in Orange County, California.

We belong to numerous industry organizations, including the Orange County Chapter of the American Electronics Association (AeA) and the International Association of Plastics Distributors (IAPD). SYSPRO exhibits at local trade shows and appears at local industry events, the programs of which often feature speeches by SYSPRO representatives.

SYSPRO USA President and Joint MD Joey Benadretti is on the Editorial Advisory Boards of several technology publications, and SYSPRO is a strong believer in giving back to the community in which it operates.



Rodney Marais, FD, SYSPRO

For example, SYSPRO adopted two needy families for the 2007 holidays. The first family was located through the Probation Community Action Association (PCAA), a non-profit organization which helps families who have relatives on probation. A lot of these families face emotional and financial hardship and need help from the community, and their Adopt-a-Family program is geared for the holidays.

In addition, SYSPRO is a sponsor of University of California (UCI) basketball, and many SYSPRO officers have participated in half-time programs. ❖

Certification emphasizes K3's **SYSPRO expertise**

K3 Business Technology Group's long-serving support desk team has embarked on the rigorous SYSPRO Certification Program. With 25 years' experience in the solution, K3's experts have been at the forefront of delivering tailored ERP solutions to UK customers across a wide range of vertical industries.

Over the years, the team has amassed an encyclopedic knowledge of every element of the software. The Certification Program reflects this knowledge of SYSPRO and rewards individual members for their expertise in each software module.

The Program demands a thorough knowledge of the software as well as practical expertise to assist customers through technical problems and to maximize the return on their SYSPRO investment. The stringent Program will also be rolled out to SYSPRO consultants. With individual certification of key K3 personnel, customers will benefit from direct access to specialists who can deal rapidly with their queries, minimizing disruption to their businesses.

Providing the right answers to customers requiring support has been integral to K3's success in implementing SYSPRO. With official certification from SYSPRO headquarters, customers will have additional confidence that they are speaking to experts who have a thorough understanding of their software and can add value to their specific application.

Anja Soejberg, K3's Support Desk Manager, says: "We embarked on the SYSPRO Certification Program two months ago and we are making good progress. It is not an easy Program, and nor should it be as our customers deserve to know that we obtain these credentials based on in-depth study and knowledge of the precise capabilities of complete systems and modules.

"The Program is a true and powerful indicator of both our expertise and experience. It proves to our customers that we are totally fluent and competent in SYSPRO."



The Program consists of several levels and is based on self-study. The first level is based on examinations on each module that result in certificates. These add up to a proficiency award in specific disciplines. When all disciplines are certified, people are awarded full SYSPRO accreditation. Staff can top up their awards as new SYSPRO features and functionalities are introduced.

"The Program is also proving to be an invaluable training tool for new members of the team. By self studying for module certification, we gain a thorough on-the-job knowledge of the software. This practical approach is much more meaningful than studying in a vacuum, as we are able to immediately deliver what we learn each step of the way," Anja says.

"Long-serving team members also benefit from the self-study approach as they have to be re-examined as new versions of the software are released. This keeps senior staff ahead of the game and fully up to date with the latest developments."

Howard Joseph, Managing Director of K3, comments: "For more than 25 years, our people have been dedicated to providing maximum value to our customers and therefore we are committed to continual personal development. Our customers have complete confidence in our software experts and our success with the SYSPRO Certification Program highlights that we have an extremely strong and capable team. Collectively, the team has the full and appropriate skills set to provide ongoing support and add value to our customers' implementations. These accolades are well deserved." ❖



SYSPRO and BCIT – a partnership for prosperity

“We focus on materials management, supply chain logistics, and information technology as an enabler. That's where SYSPRO comes in – their software enables business processes. We use SYSPRO to demonstrate both the capabilities of the software, and the capabilities of ERP in general.”
– Chuck Spong, Program Head,
BCIT's Operations Management Program

Canadian manufacturers and distributors are increasingly concerned that skills shortages are constraining their ability to compete and grow in the global marketplace.

That's the view of John Fahey, President of SYSPRO Canada, who says: “To be successful, Canadian manufacturers must have a steady supply of well-educated workers. One of the key ways we can foster that supply is by creating solid and productive partnerships between business and education.”

As the baby-boomer generation retires, Canadian companies are faced with the challenge of finding qualified personnel from a rapidly shrinking labor pool. Since 2003, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME) has been reporting that skill shortages are having a negative effect on business performance and growth in the manufacturing sector.

In a 2005 survey, Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) members listed the shortage of qualified labor as third among the business priorities of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Looking into the future, the Conference Board of Canada reports that the ‘steep decline in labor force growth is at the root of the labor supply crisis that will develop in Canada around 2010.’

SYSPRO is playing its part in addressing the situation by providing its product suite as a teaching tool to the Operations Management program of the British Columbia Institute of Technology's (BCIT) School of Business.

Steve Bassaw, SYSPRO Canada's Professional Services Manager, comments: “Before 2000, students were being trained on the biggest,

most complicated ERP in the world – one they were unlikely to use in the local market. We began talking to BCIT about teaching a mid-size ERP as an alternative, and we ended up installing our software in their classrooms.”

Since then, Bassaw has talked to classes, led exercise labs, helped with problems, and even developed learning exercises that operations management students continue to benefit from today.

Chuck Spong, Program Head of BCIT's Operations Management Program, says: “You can't just teach from textbooks, not if you want to turn out market-ready graduates. Our focus is to provide students with the theoretical underpinnings of business and operations, and with hands-on, market-relevant experience.”

According to Spong, operations entails the design, implementation and improvement of operating processes. “We focus on materials management, supply chain logistics, and information technology as an enabler. That's where SYSPRO comes in – their software enables business processes. We use SYSPRO to demonstrate both the capabilities of the software, and the capabilities of ERP in general.”

Part of the appeal of SYSPRO, says Spong, is that the company's target market is small- to medium-sized businesses. “In our particular location, that's incredibly important. Their software supports the hands-on understanding of real-world applications, and that's an excellent fit for us.”

To further encourage students who wish to build a career in operations management, SYSPRO has instituted an annual \$1500 award to the student with the highest marks in the ERP section of the program.

“Partnerships between business and education create a win/win/win situation,” says Spong. “The students receive valuable, real-world experience; SYSPRO knows that the business leaders of tomorrow have been trained on their software; and we, as a school, produce graduates who really understand what businesses need.” ❖

SYSPRO clinches its **largest-ever** Asia-Pacific site



SYSPRO acquired its largest 2008 site in the Asia-Pacific region when it was chosen by leading printed circuit board maker Apex Circuit to provide a new ERP system for 150 concurrent users.

A leading Thai manufacturer of double-sided and multi-layer printed circuit boards (PCBs), Apex Circuit was established in 2001 and has grown rapidly to employ around 2000 people.

The company produces about 130,000 square meters of PCBs a month - roughly the area of 20 football fields - to supply global manufacturers such as Canon, Samsung, Epson, Sharp, Sony and Thomson. Its PCBs can be found in virtually every type of electronic product from

televisions to white goods, telephones and computer equipment.

With an accounting system that was failing to meet its growing requirements and no existing ERP system, Apex Circuit sought a solution that could integrate its separate databases, provide more comprehensive reporting plus improve inventory and job scheduling across its two separate manufacturing plants.

Maliwan Chinvorakijkul, Chief Financial Officer of Apex, describes the consequence of each department writing and running its own applications. "It was time consuming to close accounts and provide integrated management reporting. The separate systems also



meant double-processing of data,” she says. “Our rapid growth meant that our existing systems were no longer meeting our financial controls and reporting requirements.”

SYSPRO is currently being implemented and is scheduled to go live late this year. Running off a single server in both Thai and English, the system will integrate the production, distribution and financial processes of Apex.

The new system will assist with managing capacity and production planning to meet customers’ varying deadlines, management of shelf life of circuit boards (First In, First Out) and improve business intelligence. SYSPRO will also be linked to signage around the plant to enable live displays of measurements of quantity, quality and defects.

Chinvorakijkul explains that after extensive evaluation of other global ERP packages, Apex chose SYSPRO because it best met the company’s requirements. “SYSPRO can be easily customized – our IT team is familiar with VB and

Microsoft .Net,” she says. “It had the shortest implementation time and strong local support. SYSPRO’s business intelligence and graphical planning boards were also important features.”

Apex anticipates sales growth increasing by another 25% from this year and a third plant is scheduled to begin operating shortly. The company has future plans of listing on the Stock Exchange of Thailand, and the implementation of the new SYSPRO system is expected to provide for additional reporting requirements.

“Apex was seeking a solution that had the flexibility to adapt to its unique business processes plus strong local support,” says Shaun Butler, General Manager of SYSPRO Asia-Pacific. “Apex’s decision is a significant win for SYSPRO in Asia as it shows the quality of our solution to meet the demands of mid-market companies in a highly competitive ERP market. As the region is a manufacturing hot-spot, there is great potential for SYSPRO by working closely with local partners who understand local requirements.” ❖



SYSPRO USA enables **evolutionary progress** with **PragmaVision**

SYSPRO USA has identified a broad, underserved market segment within the SMB manufacturing/distribution space that it calls 'PragmaVision'. The buyers in this SMB category ('Pragmavists') desire a pragmatic, yet visionary solution set that gives them proven technology options.

They wisely choose not to focus on technology for technology's sake, but to select proven business applications that pragmatically protect corporate resources while providing a visionary path for growth. They seek evolution, not revolution, buying into new technologies only after there is a clear, easy understanding of the benefits.

PragmaVision is the brainchild of Brian Stein, CEO and Joint MD of SYSPRO USA, and Joey Benadretti, President and Joint MD of SYSPRO USA. The foundation of the PragmaVision philosophy is that SYSPRO's proven technology is a testament to the visionary qualities inherent in the SYSPRO solution, which offers the right combination of powerful fiscal controls, corporate governance capabilities, predictive insights into trending and the ability to react quickly to change. The 24/7, 360° view of orders and inventory, serial numbers and lot tracking, order fulfillment, sales analysis and customer service are only parts of the pragmatic makeup of the SYSPRO product.

By expounding its PragmaVision philosophy, the goal of SYSPRO USA is to convey a consistent and positive message that the tried and tested (and proven) SYSPRO product is continuing to support the unique and specific needs of businesses, helping them to keep their hands on today and their eyes on tomorrow.

According to Brian Sommer, President, TechVentive, "Software buyers are suffering from jargon-fatigue from the major software vendors. Unfortunately, these vendors don't understand that what mid-size firms want is value and innovation - not new infrastructure and expensive re-implementations. Software buyers no longer associate buzzwords with

business value. SYSPRO appears to get this and is targeting those pragmatic, but visionary buyers; manufacturing and distribution companies that want an evolutionary - versus a revolutionary - approach to their technology solutions."

Perhaps SYSPRO USA's PragmaVision approach is best validated by Cinday Jutras, Vice President and Group Director, Aberdeen Group. "SYSPRO does appeal to an evolutionary, versus revolutionary tech buyer," she says. ❖



Brian Stein –
CEO and joint MD, SYSPRO USA



Joey Benadretti –
President and Joint MD, SYSPRO USA



SYSPRO forms strategic alliance with Edwards School of Business

The Edwards School of Business at the University of Saskatchewan and SYSPRO recently entered into a strategic alliance which resulted in the SYSPRO ERP product being introduced into the Edwards School's commerce degree program from September 2008.

SYSPRO was introduced into the Purchasing and Supply Management course work, where it will be used to illustrate how ERP software manages both buying and selling processes as well as the associated planning, manufacturing and

Edwards School of Business. We look forward to working with the faculty to help them gain maximum value in their use of SYSPRO within their commerce program.

"Our newly formed relationship with the Edwards School of Business is yet another example of SYSPRO's commitment to proactively align with leading colleges and universities in Canada that provide focused education in the areas of operations and supply-chain management."



inventory control requirements of business. The Purchasing and Supply Management course work forms part of the Operations Management major curriculum of the Bachelor of Commerce degree.

Dr. Mehran Hojati, Associate Professor of the Edwards School of Business, said: "I am very pleased to have the opportunity to use SYSPRO in my purchasing management course. I will initially use it to illustrate the management of data used in purchasing and inventory control, and material requirements planning. Many employers expect our Operations Management students to have some experience with enterprise software. SYSPRO is widely used, detailed, but easy-to-use enterprise software."

John Fahey, President of SYSPRO Canada, said: "We are delighted to be able to offer our product suite as a teaching tool to another respected Canadian University such as the

For nearly 100 years, the business program at the University of Saskatchewan has stood for excellence in teaching and the student experience, excellence in research and scholarship, and excellence in community outreach and engagement. The Edwards School of Business has more than 1700 undergraduate students and 160+ graduate students. The School boasts a network of more than 18,000 alumni located in Canada and around the world. ❖



Datascope launches Mentorship Program



Datascope Consulting has launched its Mentorship program in partnership with SYSPRO and the ISETT SETA (Information Systems Electronics and Telecommunication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority).

The decision to launch the program was based on the significant skills shortage in South Africa's ICT industry.

Jared Pudney, Mentorship Project Manager of Datascope, says: "We believed we needed a program where university graduates could gain practical experience in the workplace. Consequently, we approached the ISETT SETA with a proposal which was duly approved."

The inaugural program kicked off in August, and will run for nine months. Datascope started with two interns: Nitesh Rambalie and Chris Basson. Nitesh is doing a SYSPRO ERP program

which starts with five months of intensive SYSPRO training at SYSPRO's Durban office.

On completion of the five months, Nitesh will have finished all the accreditation exams of SYSPRO Support Level 1, and this will be followed by four months of consulting coaching. Chris Basson is doing a more technical program which will cover the full software development lifecycle as well as barcoding and RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) solutions.

Datascope's Mentorship program will be closely monitored by the ISETT SETA, which will issue the interns with certificates on completion of the program.

"We are confident that the Mentorship program will be a success, and will certainly be looking to take on more graduates next year," Jared says. ❖



Africa and the Middle East

SYSPRO (Pty) Limited
Block A
Sunninghill Place
9 Simba Road
Sunninghill
Johannesburg
2191
South Africa
Tel: +27 (0) 11 461 1000
Fax: +27 (0) 11 807 4962
Email: info@za.syspro.com

Asia Pacific

SYSPRO Software Pty Limited
Level 5, 113 Wicks Road
North Ryde (Sydney) NSW 2113
Australia
Tel: +61 (2) 9870 5555
Fax: +61 (2) 9889 5566
Email: info@syspro.com.au
All enquiries:
Australia: 1300 882 311
Singapore toll free: 800 616 2209
Malaysia toll free: 1800 812 655
Indonesia toll free: 0018 0306 121 62

Canada

SYSPRO Software Limited
4400 Dominion Street
Suite 215
Burnaby (Vancouver)
British Columbia
Canada
V5G 4G3
Tel: +1 (604) 451-8889
Fax: +1 (604) 451-8834
Email: info@ca.syspro.com

UK & Europe

K3 Business Technology Group
Baltimore House
50 Kansas Avenue
Salford Quays
Manchester
United Kingdom
M50 2GL
Tel: +44 161 876 4498
Fax: +44 161 876 4502
Email: syspro@k3scs.com

USA & Americas

SYSPRO Impact Software, Inc.
959 South Coast Drive, Suite 100
Costa Mesa, (Los Angeles region)
California
92626
USA
Tel: +1 (714) 437 1000
Fax: +1 (714) 437 1407
Toll free: (800) 369-8649
Email: info@us.syspro.com

www.syspro.com

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