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# The View from 30 Feet: *Plastic Components, Inc.'s Tool Crib System*

*Business gurus often talk about the view from 30,000 feet – the big picture that provides a look at overall operations. Perhaps, however, the focus should be on the view from 30 feet – a close-up of specific processes and procedures that make an impact now.*

With more than 200 tools, Plastic Components, Inc. (PCI), Germantown, WI, needed a more efficient way to organize its tooling. Implementation of the Stak System by Stanley Storage Systems, purchased through Birkeneder Material Handling, LLC, has made PCI's tooling easily accessible, saving both time and space.

"We used to have several heavy duty die racks stored around the facility," said Bob Allcox, operations manager for PCI. "You'd go from rack to rack to rack trying to find the equipment that you needed. It was a lot of wasted time."

PCI has implemented a simple system, comprised of adjustable shelving and a crane. A chain hoist allows the crane to pick up a set of forks, which can be used to move any of the shelves for access when tooling is needed. The shelves stretch 12 to 13 feet high under PCI's 17-foot roof. Each shelf can be taken out separately and the pallets are detachable. The rack is essentially a large frame with hooks that the pallets hook onto, at varying heights.

"All of our tools are stored in that area now," explained Allcox, "which freed up a lot of space on the floor. We can stack the shelves higher than we would have been able to with a traditional storage system."



PCI labels the dies and shelves, and then that information is entered into the IQMS system. When tooling is needed, the molds can be searched by die number or by shelf number. "Initially, we put all of the tools on the shelves and recorded their location," said Allcox. "Over time, we've moved the commonly used tools toward the front. There's a weight concern per shelf, too, so we reorganized as time went on. It was quick to implement and use, and then we got more efficient."

The system is working out so well that PCI recently ordered three additional sections of racking system to provide more storage. "We've seen a great increase in efficiency in terms of getting and replacing tools on the production floor," Allcox explained. "It operates with just one person, so we don't have multiple personnel required to get in there and get the right tooling for each job." ■