

Company Bio

Porocel is a worldwide leader in catalyst services and a leading producer of activated alumina, specialty adsorbents, and support media for the refining and petrochemical industries. The company also offers catalyst regeneration, presulphurizing, and grading services as well as a range of toll processing services, including calcination, drying, forming, impregnation, size reduction, and classification.

Founded in 1937, Porocel is based in Houston, Texas, and has five manufacturing sites and offices in North America, Europe, and Southeast Asia. The company's catalyst service facilities are in North America, Europe, and the Asia Pacific. The company's Little Rock, Arkansas, site manufactures activated alumina and activated bauxite, and provides various toll processing services.



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Mike Goldman
Porocel Maintenance Planner

Business Challenge

Maintenance professionals often need to hit the ground running. That was certainly the case when Mike Goldman, Porocel maintenance planner, started his job with the company in late 2017. Mike quickly realized maintenance processes at his location hadn't kept pace with the company's rapid growth.

Porocel's 16-person maintenance team at the company's Little Rock, Arkansas, site was primarily reactive—and it wasn't working for the techs or the company.

"They were like Indiana Jones running in front of that stone," Mike explained. "If you're small company, you can run maintenance off someone's clipboard. That doesn't work as things get bigger. They didn't know what they didn't know."

Mike was hired to help Porocel figure out what they needed to know. His former work with a high-tech defense contractor meant he understood how to create a more structured maintenance environment.

His first step was assessing how the maintenance department was currently run—the who, what, when, where, and why. His next step was finding the way forward.

In what he describes as "divine intervention," he discovered the solution on the company's server: MPulse Gold. And in the next 60 days, he got the Little Rock plant on and using MPulse to effectively and efficiently manage their maintenance workload.



From Zero to 60:

How Porocel Jumpstarted Its Maintenance Program with MPulse in 60 Days

Solution

Porocel bought MPulse 7 Gold in 2011, and it was used by some of the company's other sites. But the Little Rock plant had never fully implemented it, and it was left mostly unused on the local servers.

Mike started experimenting with MPulse to see what it could do. He soon realized it made more sense to upgrade for free to the faster, more full-featured MPulse 8. He also decided to take advantage of MPulse's free cloud hosting, where the software would run in a dedicated, professionally managed environment and he didn't have to worry about hardware. After getting buy-in from other Porocel sites and his IT team, Mike made the changes.

"I called MPulse and asked them how quickly we could make it happen," said Mike. "When I came in the next morning, it was done. I put in my login and password—and it worked."

But Mike wasn't done yet. He also needed buy-in from his techs, about a quarter of whom were uncomfortable with computers. Using MPulse 8's Advanced Customization features, Mike designed his MPulse work orders so it took techs just a few clicks to enter information, thanks to the custom fields, nested fields, and custom prompts.

"I created form view and record view layouts that had everything the guys need to see—and nothing they don't need to see," Mike said. "The latter is as just important, or more so."

Benefits

Using resources from MPulse's support portal and a few calls to MPulse phone support, Mike got MPulse working the way he wanted. After working through some internal training with his techs, he saw immediate benefits:

✓ Work Order Management

Work order management is the heart of Mike's new strategy. Before, the company's work assignments were physically handed out after morning meetings, which delayed the maintenance team's ability to start work as soon as possible.

Now Porocel's operators create work orders directly in MPulse, and they're assigned electronically. Mike estimates each tech gains about 30-60 minutes of work time each day using this process.

✓ Preventive Maintenance Schedules

Mike also wanted to move his team from 100% reactive to a more balanced reactive/proactive strategy. With help from Porocel's operators and maintenance techs, Mike set up PM schedules in MPulse for key assets.

"Our first automatically generated work orders occurred last weekend," he said. "I checked MPulse on my phone and could track them through from issued to completed and closed."

✓ ISO Certification

Porocel is ISO 9000 certified, and Mike knew from experience that he needed to track the details of the manufacturer's increasingly complex maintenance operation to maintain that certification.

He's started the process with MPulse by setting up a PM program that will help the company pass inspections and audits—and avoid a last-minute rush to set things in order.

✓ Inventory

Another big item in Mike's plan is inventory management for consumables—filters, belts, etc. Mike plans to manage inventory and assign locations in MPulse.

"We'll be able to use MPulse to see if we have filters and where they are," he said. "And it's more likely that filters will actually be on the shelf when we go look."



From Zero to 60

Mike and Porocel have come a long way in just 60 days. Mike believes more companies need help from a CMMS analyst like him, but they don't know it—and some don't even know it's possible.

"It's the art of marrying the tool with the process," he explained. "In the end, you need documentable and repeatable processes to use tools most effectively to support the assets you want to maintain."



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