

## CASE STUDY:

## AGA RANGEMASTER

Process Improvement Notes  
System (PINS)

AGA Rangemaster is a leading international premium consumer brands group which manufactures and distributes some of the best known and loved kitchen appliances and interior furnishings in the world.

Brands include AGA, La Cornue, Rangemaster, Falcon, Rayburn, Grange and Fired Earth.

Known for its long-standing heritage (the group originated with the founding of an engineering business in 1939), technical excellence and innovation, the Group now operates production facilities in the UK, USA, France and Ireland and has worldwide wholesale and retail distribution generating sales of £250 million plus.

## The Challenge

In any business there is a constant to-and-fro of unmanaged communication in the form of ad-hoc email, telephone and general conversations, text messages, etc., both internally and with external suppliers.

In a large and complex business such as AGA Rangemaster which manufactures and outsources component manufacture world-wide, much of this communication deals with business critical issues including supplier conformance.

"In a business as large and complex as ours, it's obviously vital that day to day issues are dealt with as and where they arise. It would simply be impossible and unnecessary for management to intervene on every occasion" says Stephen Beggan, the AGA Rangemaster Quality Manager, but the company also recognised the risks inherent in this situation:

- No 'follow through' - a specific issue might be addressed but no mechanism existed to ensure that the root cause was identified and action taken so that the same problem could not re-occur.
- No audit trail – it was difficult or impossible to establish at a later date what action had been taken and by whom with consequent risk to compliance.

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- No mechanism to empower junior staff to resolve issues without reference to managers. Therefore management time was constantly wasted dealing with issues that could and should have been fully resolved without their intervention.
- Problems remained unseen until they became major issues with consequent production and brand related costs.

As Beggan explains, the group decided to implement an IT based system to assist with the management process, "All our employees are committed to quality throughout our business. We wanted to empower them by providing a system to formalise and monitor these communications'.



# The Solution

Red Ledge developed PINS (Process Improvement Notes System), a comprehensive solution that completely addresses all of these issues across every one of AGA Rangemaster's critical business processes.

As Beggan says, "The PINS system completely addresses these shortcomings by bringing this ad-hoc communication into a controlled, structured and managed environment but still retains the ease of use of traditional email."

Users create a Process Improvement Note (PIN) for any issue. The PIN may be addressed to other AGA Rangemaster employees or to external suppliers. The recipient has a specific time to respond otherwise the PIN is escalated for management action. The PIN is recorded, tracked, and monitored. Using workflow technology, the PIN is automatically escalated through the management chain should no action result or should the parties not be able to agree that an issue has been resolved.

The solution can be applied to manage any business process including, for example:

- Document Control & distribution
- Auditing
- Customer Complaints
- Supplier Management
- Problem Reporting
- Corrective Action
- Management Information & Review
- Training Records & Job Descriptions
- Equipment Calibration

According to Beggan, the system has delivered real benefits to AGA Rangemaster, "by automating the majority of the day-to-day management issues, and by empowering users to report and resolve issues as they occur, PINS has delivered significant savings in middle and senior management man-time".



**Red Ledge Limited is a Huddersfield based company focused on the application of technology to solve business problems and to improve business processes.**

The company offers a range of off-the-shelf systems for the manufacturing and industrial sectors as well as bespoke solutions which combine proven breadth and depth of technology capability with practical business knowledge and experience.



PINS is hosted in 'the cloud' which means that it can be accessed world-wide using any PC or mobile device with an internet connection and it works with AGA Rangemaster's own familiar processes so very little training was required. AGA Rangemaster were able to implement the system without any disruption to their existing business.

Comments Beggan "The system has been adopted throughout the Group and its' supply chain. The system is used every day right up to director level. Once an action has been recorded as a PIN, the system will ensure that it's progressed to a conclusion."



As well as many household names here in the UK, systems developed and delivered by Red Ledge are in daily use within companies across the world, including China and the United States, as well as European countries including Rumania and Turkey.

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