GLOBAL SHOP

MANUFACTURING SOFTWARE REVIEW **BY SHELDON NEEDLE**

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Summary

Global Shop Solutions (current version 16.2) provides a comprehensive solution for small and middle market companies who seek support for job shop manufacturing activities. The companies that are interested in this product are usually in the make-to-order or engineered-to-order anufacturing environments where extensive use of bills of material processing, production planning, shop orders and shop floor management functionality are essential. The manufacturing components of Global Shop meet these requirements and, in addition, address several non-manufacturing requirements that include project accounting, customer order management with a product configuration module, and an executive dashboard.

On the negative side, the user interface and various functions still suffer from its legacy Pervasive SQL foundation which, according to GSS is being rewritten to SQL.

Industry Verticals Served

Global Shop's sales center on job shop manufacturing where a strong planning, shop floor scheduling and work center management is required. The company addresses the following industry verticals:

- Aerospace
- Electrical
  - Wire Production
  - Wiring Assemblies
  - PCB Assemblies
  - Surface Mount Assemblies
- Machine Shop
- Medical Device Manufacturing
- Plastics/Rubber Manufacturing
- Automotive
- Furniture Manufacturing
  - Custom
  Large Runs
- Motor Assemblies
- Metal Fabrication
- Wood Products

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Component Modules

To service these industry verticals, *One-System ERP Solutions* supports a wide array of software modules:

- Shop Management – provides estimating, quoting, job costing, and tracking, work-in-process
- Materials Solutions – offers automated purchasing to inventory management
- Financial Solutions – handles Accounts Payables and Receivables, General Ledger, Payroll and Financial Statements
- Online Systems – supports time and attendance, tracking labor costs, and employee performance
- Sales Solutions – includes functionality for sales order entry, sales analysis, custom reporting with real-time reporting on sales data, demand planning and forecasting, as well as a product configurator
- Advanced Planning and Scheduling (APS) – Production Scheduling with the ability to view results in real-time
- Quality/Disposition Tracking – Warranty, Return Material Authorizations and Engineering Change Notices
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) – associated with the Sales Solutions module, it provides a one screen presentation of customer focused data
- Business Intelligence – feature allows the creation of charts, graphs and reports to analyze business activity
- Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) – enables the transmission of data between business entities and allows for automatic processing of specified transactions
- Shop Reports – a galley of pre-defined reports which is supplemented through use of *Crystal Reports*

- Wireless – provides support for handheld devices in tracking of online data, including physical inventory, purchase order receipts, inventory transfers and others
- Global Application Builder (GAB) – a programming tool to allow users to modify their ERP system.

Technical Discussion

Global Shop is programmed in Visual Basic although the original package's origins were in COBOL. At some point along the way the package may have been reprogrammed in VB.Net

The package's database is Pervasive SQL, and not the standard Microsoft version of SQL. It does support *Crystal Reports* as a third party report writer for customized reporting.

Support is provided by trained consultants each with 10 or more years with the software. Global Shop offers *FastHelp* which is a comprehensive and easy to use documentation system while *FastResponse* is an automated call forwarding function to speed your calls to the *GS ServiceWeb* for your answers. *FastFacts* is a digital newsletter which provides additional information on a regular basis to help you streamline your application.

Comments on Noteworthy Components

While Global Shop appears to have all the functionality and the ease of use claimed, the buyer should be aware of the following while doing their due diligence prior to buying the solution:

- Be sure the vendor can support your implementation in your local geographical area. We have received comments that Global Shop's resources are limited and not

geographically flexible is some areas of the US.

- Understand the extent of the vendor's resources for implementation support for on-going problem resolution.
- Pervasive SQL is an older less popular database and does not have the more standardized plug compatibility that Microsoft SQL offers.
- Pervasive does not have as fast a response time as other databases and developing more complex reports with native tools can be challenging.
- Perform a scripted demonstration and specifically test system's screen navigation and content: processes
- Check the ease of functionality for Advanced Planning and Scheduling, Customer Specific Pricing, Available to Promise, EDI, and Customer Portal
- Check drilldown capabilities

Conclusion

As with all software, the buyer needs to be fully informed of the features and usability of the package prior to purchase. Further, the buyer needs to compare the functionality of ERP software across multiple vendors to ensure the best fit. There is nothing better than a detailed requirements definition, prepared by the buyer or his consultant, to be used as a yard stick for measuring the package's conformance to the company's business practices. In this light, Global Shop merits consideration, if your requirements match their offering.

Social media has many comments on Global Shop, both very positive and others very negative. Many of the negatives have to do with speed and performance due to the old technology of Pervasive SQL which has been upgraded to MS SQL.

About Sheldon Needle

A former CFO, consultant and software designer, Sheldon Needle has authored or co-authored more than 20 books on software selection and has contributed articles to major publications, including the Journal of Accountancy and Nation's Business. CTSGuides.com has the distinction of being the very first company to do hands-on, independent evaluations of software for the middle market.

Sheldon speaks with business owners and managers every day about software selection and makes personalized recommendations based on their needs and budget. He is widely known and respected throughout the business software community for his independence, integrity and expertise.

As part of registering for our free software selection kit, you receive a 15-minute consult with Sheldon. Sheldon understands financial and business issues and speaks your language.

He knows the leading software companies—how they compare, their strengths and weaknesses, where they fit into the market and which ones would be suitable for your business.