



Hands-on quality management

Staffordshire-based KMF (Precision Sheet Metal) (www.kmf.co.uk) has introduced a hand-held system to capture and distribute process information from individual elements of the business. This will give the company greater control and enable it to predict — and react to — conditions that could adversely affect quality. At the heart of its new data capture procedure is the Principle Suite software from Applied Principles; this works in tandem with the hand-held units to collect images, data and — critically — signatures from process 'owners'.

The collected data creates a 'health check' for a particular process; this is then automatically distributed by e-mail to team leaders and other relevant members of staff, encouraging greater co-operation. The information will also play a valuable role in the company's management system audits, with a track of actions taken to eliminate non-conformities. The real aim, of course, is to reassure customers that their work is being closely monitored to ensure full compliance with their specific quality needs.

Quality manager Gary Sutton says: "Once implemented, the audit process is 'owned' and managed by the team who are directly responsible for the control of that process. This creates much better links between process 'owners' and quality teams, who can now focus on reducing variation. I feel that this will change the way we manage quality, maintenance and health and safety."