

All That's Old ERP is New Again for Norlen, Inc.!

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Organizations running legacy ERP systems who need easy access to ERP data, without "reinventing the wheel" of existing paper reports, will want to take note of Monarch in action at Norlen, Inc., a Wisconsin-based leader in metal part manufacturing.

Dale Burgess, IS Manager for Norlen, Inc., tells us: "In our existing ERP system, we live and die by our Job Recaps. This is a report that is produced every two weeks, showing every job, various costs and the profit associated with the job. The report would be roughly six inches thick if printed, and would have to be passed around (more like lugged around!) among the executives of the company."

Analyzing the Job Recaps over time was even more cumbersome. "If managers wanted to check on a previous job, they would have to locate the old report, and thumb through it to get the numbers," says Dale. "In order to check on the long-term profitability of a job across several months, you might have to check two, three, four or more of these reports, searching for various times the part had been manufactured!"

"I was asked to come up with a way to get this data in an electronic form," Dale contin-

ues. "The catch was that these numbers were calculated specifically for the report, and appeared nowhere in the database." This problem is quite common: Dale and his colleagues needed not only the raw data in the company ERP database, but that data combined with business rules – those special calculations that make the data useful. As in Dale's case, those business rules often exist only within the reports themselves!

"While scratching my head, I chanced upon an advertisement for Monarch," Dale continues. "I purchased and downloaded the software off the Datawatch website, and soon developed a Monarch model template which 'read' the reports and extracted all the needed Job Recap data. From there I could easily export the data to an MS Access database.

"Thanks to Monarch, people now have easy access to the information they need, instead of spending hours searching for it as they had previously. I have used Monarch with similar success for other projects as well."

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