

# N E W S

World leaders in handling and feeding technology

## NEWS

# Website Based Project Management

by Ying Zhang

RNA have recently launched an online management tool integrated with the current website to support RNA project management and client communications. This creates a client area on the RNA website and enables customers to login with a user name and password. Files can be shared that have been uploaded specifically for a client.

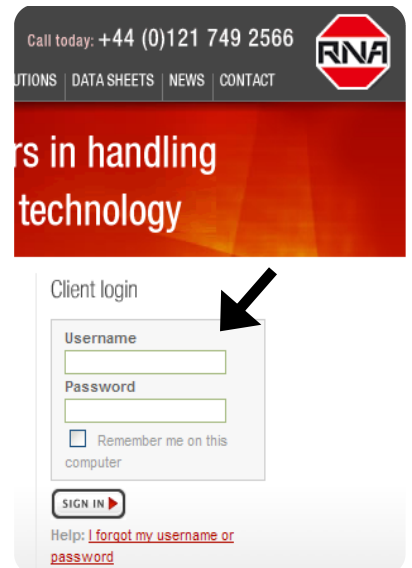
The entire system is accessed and managed online, which helps with simultaneous management of multiple projects. There are four main functionalities of the system: Messages; File sharing; To-Do lists; and Milestones.

**Messages** The message board is a great tool for communicating with clients. Customers can post messages and notify any or all members of a project, who is required to "action" or respond. The message threads encourage active participation from our clients, which give them the

opportunity to comment at every stage of a project. Even at the quotation stage, this can be a useful forum to complement telephone and email. An instant message discussion can occur at anytime and include many project members at the same time. RNA is also using this function for internal discussions on how to handle tasks between all members working on a particular project.

**File Sharing** With built-in file sharing functionality, it is easy to share documents with clients for a project. This allows clients to exchange files and documents with RNA project members by uploading them onto a secure, fast and reliable online storage area. Upload photos, videos, CAD drawings, quotations, or reference items. With this functionality, it removes any potential difficulties of sharing large files such as reference videos and high resolution photos; with the advantage of exchanging information at any time from anywhere.

**To-Do Lists** Within the system, multiple to-do lists can be created for each project, with specific items added and relevant people assigned for each list. This function allows clients to



check the status of a project, understand progress against milestones and outstanding issues to be dealt with. Our clients are also allowed access to post comments and attach files to an individual to-do list, thereby participating very closely in the manufacturing process. In combination with 'Milestones', this function effectively supplements RNA Project Management procedures and helps prevent possible delays, at the same time keeping the customer fully in the picture at all times.

**Milestones** Milestone provides a simple framework to map out general project timelines at a high level. The functionality enables us to keep track of important



Welcome to the September issue of RNA newsletter

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*A day in the life of a RNA Sales Engineer*

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project deadlines, such as due date for quotations. With this function, it is more effective for an RNA project manager to allocate tasks to project members and monitor their progress. Equally, our clients are also able to keep track of what's due, when it's due, and who is responsible.

For RNA, we are primarily using the system to manage exchanging files and improve communications with

clients. We use the system as a single information repository, primarily for external projects, often with our clients and partners around the world. A case in point is communication with our North American facility, where time and distance can become an issue. So the ability to access all information, documents, and files from one centralized place is extremely valuable to not only our workflow, but

also our clients. This portal becomes a focal point effectively allowing access to RNA projects "24/7" for all of our members and clients.

'We consider this initiative to be key in our ability to improve communication with our clients and believe it will result in better and faster decision-making and exchange of ideas'.

## CASE STUDIES

# The ZE3000 Flexible via Standard Components

Suitable for all industries especially **Pharmaceuticals, FMCGs, and OEM Equipment Builders**

RNA has introduced the ZE3000 capable of handling a wide range of components, from valves and spray caps, to electrical connectors at high feed speeds (>2000 parts per minute), single or multiple lanes are possible with quick and easy change over between components.

The tracks are machined and designed specifically to suit a component. Interchangeable tooling sections allow the feeding of a range of components with minimum down time between product changeover. The ZE is supplied with a bulk hopper that can be orientated through 180 degrees to specifically suit the customers layout and floor space.

The photo shows a ZE3000 unit handling a 23mm diameter x 18mm tall aerosol actuator cap at 2000 + parts per minute. Fitted with a bulk hopper that has a very low loading height of 600mm, components are easily loaded by an operator and elevated to the top of a linear track. The linear

track is designed on CAD and laser cut to orientate the caps as they are transported along 8 lanes, then merged to single lane via a centrifugal disc. Compressed air is not used for orientation purposes.

The use of 8 tracks allows the speed of individual lanes to be reduced, virtually eliminating the risk of damage to product and contributing to lower noise levels.

The ZE3000 has the advantage of fast and simple changeover, no use of pneumatic air for orientation and open style tooling for easy access for operators, maintenance and cleaning purposes.

The linear feeder arrangement allows high feed speeds to be achieved using a single unit rather than multiple bowl feeders and with the combined bulk hopper the system has a relatively small footprint.

The ZE system is made up from the proven equipment range of RNA standard products. This



makes it possible for all important parts of the system including hopper, linear vibrator and recirculation to be

manufactured in a quick and cost-effective manner.

# A day in the life of a RNA Sales Engineer

by Ying Zhang

Ken Cotterill has been with RNA for just over twenty years and was brought into the business to enhance the sales team.

Ken has a number of important responsibilities and in talking to him it is obvious what a passion he has for the industry and RNA.

“My main focus lies in three areas: increasing sales for the south and Ireland, liaising with customers with current projects and as a contact for after sales support.”

“To help increase sales I focus on site visits with customers and provide a solution tailored to their requirements.”

A typical day starts with preparing quotations and checking emails before hitting the road, Ken’s first appointment today is in Kent, over four hundred miles, are expected door to door.

Ken’s first customer today has an existing bowl feeder that is misfeeding and jamming. The components are manufactured from rubber always a difficult material to handle. Ken suggests a new replacement bowl top is required as the component size has changed. Photographs are taken with bowl measurements and details, and Ken asks for a bag of the new components, crucial for evaluation back at the office.

“On site meetings with new and existing customers is one of my favourite parts of the role for RNA. My engineering background helps when dealing with enquiries but I also refer to RNA’s library of historical projects and rely heavily on the applications department back at base.”

Ken’s next meeting is with a new customer who made contact a few days ago and has a new project to feed caps at 240+ parts per minute.

“One of the most time consuming areas of my role is setting up appointments by phone. This particular enquiry came from RNA’s new online system, which enables file sharing and has an online enquiry form.”

“The online system is based around RNA’s website and can be used by customers to send photographs of components and layouts. Into today’s fast paced working environment and with many project managers travelling, this is a good way of keeping a project or enquiry moving.”

“RNA have vast experience of vibratory feeders but I can also call on other concepts such as centrifugal feeders or vision guided robots. For this range of product and feed speed a centrifugal feeder will fit the bill perfectly, low noise, small footprint and extremely high output.”

The day’s final appointment is with a new contact.

“I always ask for a tour of the company prior to discussing an enquiry.”

“This gives me an understanding of the customer’s capabilities and business. I feel strongly that reciprocal business is a large part of any sales role and like to pass on leads with my OEM customers.”

Ken has worked in the manufacturing sector all his life after gaining a mechanical engineering apprenticeship with Tucker fasteners.

“Working in the automation industry is great; I have a passion for special purpose machinery. No enquiry is the same and you can never tell what a customer will want us to handle from frozen shrimps to the latest high street cosmetics. Being able to work in an industry that is so diverse really does make getting out of bed early ready to hit the road that little bit easier!”

**If you have an enquiry or a problem with automation that needs solving why not get in touch and give Ken a call you never know it might just make your day a little brighter.**

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