



LAUNCH LOGIC

Building a better launch process





LAUNCHLOGIC: BUILDING A BETTER LAUNCH PROCESS

To ensure that new customer projects achieve production quickly, New Berlin Plastics has developed the LaunchLogic process. It combines a streamlined and optimized process for project launches with proprietary software that enhances project communication and collaboration.

The result is a 98% on-time launch track record, achieved over 100 open customer projects.

In this special report, we'll take a closer look at the biggest challenge customers typically face during project launches - and how this innovative new approach solves them.

THE BIGGEST PROBLEM WITH PROJECT LAUNCHES

Project launches in the plastic injection molding industry require a significant amount of molder/customer communications. The two parties must discuss a variety of part design optimization, tool design, polymer selection and other issues as the molder dials-in its production process to meet the customer's requirements.

Historically, many molders have used a weekly update with action items to facilitate project communications. But there's a problem with this approach: There's no accountability to ensure that each of the action items are completed on a timely basis.

Often, the majority of communication is done on an

ad hoc basis. As a result, a lack of regular communication tends to lead to uncertainty about the project timeline.

The result? The launch process is often delayed and miscommunication and finger-pointing become the norm.

A BETTER WAY: THE LAUNCHLOGIC PROCESS

The foundation of project launches at New Berlin Plastics is a diagrammed and streamlined process that has been honed to scalpel-like efficiency via continuous improvement. Complementing it is our proprietary new LaunchLogic software, which enables agile communication between New Berlin Plastics engineers and our customers.

This web-based application solves the biggest problem with the typical launch processes: It's structured to provide closed-loop management of action items. In other words, business rules can be configured so that it alerts project participants if their tasks aren't resolved on a timely basis.

If these action items still aren't answered, they are escalated to a higher level of priority. This makes it easy for project managers and engineers from our team and our customers to view and resolve them promptly.

Customers can control the frequency of updates within the application's settings, ensuring that they aren't bombarded with too many action items, yet are still able to respond to their key tasks on a timely basis.

The advantage of this approach is that it shows if project timing is starting to slip, so both parties can recover quickly and keep the launch process on track.

"LaunchLogic is designed so that we and our customers can be faster together," explains New Berlin Plastics President Jim Schneberger. "I've worked for several other molders in my career. Project communications was a big pain point for them and their customers. That's why solving that problem was a high priority for me when I came to New Berlin Plastics."



MORE THAN JUST THE SOFTWARE

But there's more at work here than just a new piece of software to manage project communications: LaunchLogic is part of a reinvention of New Berlin Plastics' culture to focus on its customers and continuous improvement.

As part of its launch process, New Berlin Plastics follows the Production Part Approval Process (PPAP). It's a checklist that's designed to demonstrate that a supplier has developed its design and production process to meet its client's requirements. The purpose of any PPAP is to:

- Ensure that a supplier can meet the manufacturability and quality requirements of the parts supplied to the customer.
- Provide evidence that the customer engineering design record and specification requirements are clearly understood and fulfilled by the supplier.
- Demonstrate that the established manufacturing process has the potential to produce parts that consistently meets all requirements during the actual production run at the quoted production rate of the manufacturing process.

Backing up PPAP is a solid focus on continuous improvement. For example, we utilize cross-functional teams for improved problem solving and process improvement. Also, data collected during customer launch processes is archived in our ERP system. That enables us to do data mining to determine which processes are working best and which practices we should avoid.

We have also retrained our employees to think of customer projects as their own. "They're given ownership to look for improvements and efficiencies that will benefit the customer," Schneberger explains. "Most molders pass on the cost of high scrap rates and other inefficiencies to their customers. We knew there had to be a better way."

He emphasizes that the foundation of New Berlin Plastics' reinvention is really a combination of process and method improvements. LaunchLogic simply builds upon that. "Without those foundational improvements, the software wouldn't be as valuable," he adds.

The result is that LaunchLogic has achieved a 98% on-time launch track record over 100 open customer projects.

Our data-driven approach helps our customers make better-informed decisions about their supply chain planning and go-to-market strategies. Most importantly, it enables New Berlin Plastics to consistently produce high-quality parts that meet our customers' specifications.

"It enables us to provide our customers with a superior experience. It's a difference-maker!" Schneberger concludes.



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LEARN MORE ABOUT LAUNCHLOGIC

Contact us today for a no-charge 30-minute consultation on how LaunchLogic and New Berlin Plastics can add value to your supply chain.

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