

**Client:** Lucite  
**Sector:** Acrylics Manufacture

## Key tools or services: Lean maintenance

### Requirement

Having already achieved cost savings totalling over £1.2m as a direct result of the work it has carried out with us – and with more efficiency gains in the pipeline – the team at Lucite International is fully on board with the improvement programme that we have implemented.

Lucite is a global leader in the design, development and manufacture of acrylic-based products. The products it produces go into the manufacture of a vast array of everyday items ranging from baths to furniture to flat screen TVs. The company's Cassel Works plant on Teesside is the world's second largest producer of methacrylates and plays an important role in the global supply chain for acrylics. Cassel Works is a top-tier COMAH regulated site employing around 250 people on site.

Ian Cavanagh from picme® began working with members of the Lucite team in early 2007 with a key aim of implementing lean techniques to minimise shutdown time.

### Response

Steve McMahon from Lucite, who worked closely with Ian and the picme® team, says: "We identified four areas where the picme® lean working methods could be introduced and the results of the two projects that have been completed so far have been a resounding success.

"In the first project, the changing of a pump, which previously took four days, was trimmed down to 11 hours. This led to a one-off cost saving of £740,000. In the second project, the cleaning of a cooling tower, which in the past took nine or ten days, was cut down to 33 hours. This led to a saving of £200,000. Naturally, we are delighted with these results."

While such results certainly bode well for Lucite, more pertinent as far as the long term is concerned is the work picme® has carried out with Steve and his colleagues in terms of reducing shutdown time at its crucial MM7 plant. Two shutdowns take place at the plant each year for vital maintenance work and, as such, any savings that can be made have long term ramifications.

The initial target was to reduce shutdown time from 9 to 6.5 days. By achieving this, savings totalling £360,000 – £180,000 for each shutdown – have been achieved on an annual basis. "The real significance of these savings is that these are shutdowns we make twice a year and, as such, the work we have done with picme® has been crucial in terms of the long term success of the plant." Yet the team is not stopping there, having been so enthused by the picme® way of working that they believe more savings can be made. "As a team, we are very confident that ultimately we can get the shutdown down to 4.5 days which, naturally, will lead to even greater savings," says Steve.

For Steve, while the changes that have been initiated with the shutdown of MM7 by us have proved invaluable, integral to the continuous improvement that has been made has been the enthusiasm of the team. "I really wish I could bottle the enthusiasm the team has shown because they really have been first class," Steve says. "There has been a real zeal and pride to their work which has been pivotal to the success we have achieved with the masterclass."

### Result

- > Annual savings of £360,000 through reduced maintenance shutdown times
- > Pump changeover reduced from 4 days to just 11 hours – saving £740,000
- > Cleaning of cooling tower reduced to 33 hours (previously 9-10 days) – saving £200,000

Steve and his colleagues have now replicated the success that has been achieved with MM7 with its sister plant – MM8 – on the same site.

To find out how picme® can help you and your business get in touch today:

**Call 0161 304 5909**

or email: [enquiries@picme.org](mailto:enquiries@picme.org)

**I think there is certainly an incentive when the team can see the results of their work and the masterclass approach of picme® provides this incentive. Clear goals are established and as far as our team was concerned, it was then a matter of sheer pride in terms of becoming ever more efficient.**

Steve McMahon, Lucite

## About us

picme® is one of the UK's most respected business improvement consultancies. We have an impressive pedigree, having originally been set up by the DTI, Chemical Industries Association and several other trade organisations with the specific aim of helping to improve efficiency and competitiveness within the chemical, pharmaceutical, plastics, rubber and polymer industries.

Since then we have expanded our areas of expertise and are now the partner of choice for many of the country's leading organisations. We specialise in delivering world-class, sustainable business improvement to companies of all sizes, with emphasis on the development and up-skilling of the workforce as a whole.

## Clients we are proud to work with

- > AL Controls
- > Akzo Nobel
- > Baker Petrolite
- > Ineos Chlor LTD
- > Innovia Films
- > Instarmac
- > Johnson Matthey
- > Jotun
- > Lucite
- > Lundbeck Pharmaceuticals
- > Marley Plumbing and Drainage
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- > North Wales Police
- > Piramal Healthcare
- > Process Industry Client
- > South Tees NHS Trust
- > Thermo Fisher Scientific
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