About aPriori

The aPriori Enterprise Cost Management software platform improves the financial results of discrete manufacturing and product companies by enabling them to actively control Cost of Goods Sold (COGS) with real-time, predictive and precise product cost assessments.

aPriori’s proven and patent-protected software platform allows companies to assess, control and reduce the cost of their products in real time, at any time during design, sourcing and manufacture. This enables companies to understand the cost impact of product design decisions.

SCOPE Project in the Context of aPriori

Virtual Production Environments

Data models of Manufacturing Plant Capabilities, Routings, Machines and Cost Accounting Data

VPE Editor Interface and Program

Purpose:

To create an application to allow both customers and the aPriori services team to create, manage and maintain production data for multiple manufacturing locations worldwide.

Methods:

The SCOPE team employed a rapid user-centric design process to design a new workflow and interface for the VPE Manager program. This included interviews with aPriori services, diagramming the workflow, and paper prototyping before implementing the program in Excel VBA. At every step of the implementation, the team reviewed the program progress with aPriori to confirm direction and to refine requirements.

Results:

The team created and implemented a VPE manager that works with aPriori’s import and export capabilities and includes functionality to store and display metadata, as well as creating a new file structure. The team debuted the program at aPriori on May 2, 2008.

Surface Treatment Research

Purpose:

To increase aPriori’s supported process models by providing the groundwork research on surface treatments such as painting and plating. The information that the team collected will be used as a framework for a new process group for aPriori software.

Methods:

The SCOPE team first familiarized themselves with the terminology and conventions of surface treatments through scholarly research.

A visit to two JLG manufacturing plants in Pennsylvania allowed hands-on study of two surface treatments, spray painting and powder coating.

The team broke the painting steps down into flow charts that detailed the painting process and the factors that require consideration when building a cost model.

Results:

The surface treatment research culminated in process diagrams of various levels of detail on the steps in the painting process and a specification as to what cost drivers may be and areas to explore further.

The flow charts created were a general painting chart, a painting details chart that specifically covered spray painting and powder coating, and a general plating chart.

In addition, the team produced a document identifying potential cost drivers and additional areas to research further.

Next Steps for the SCOPE Projects

The process module for painting will be included in an upcoming release of aPriori software.

The VPE Manager program is in the hands of aPriori and can now be modified to fit changing requirements as the aPriori software develops and changes. The work also revealed details about the aPriori VPE editing process that were previously not addressed.

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