



Smart Business Case Study

QUEST INDUSTRIES LTD

Participant in the second Smart Business Acceleration Programme



COMPANY FIRMLY IN THE DRIVING SEAT

“Vision Manawatu’s Smart Business Acceleration Programme was all useful and very stimulating, and was what we needed to grow the business on the international marketing side.”

YURGEN SHAFFER, GENERAL MANAGER, QUEST INDUSTRIES

Quest Industries is one of Palmerston North’s well-established companies with more than 40 staff and a track record in exports of automotive parts and mouldings. In business since 1971, the company has major export markets in Australia and China but is looking to expand into new markets, particularly the UK. Finding a way to break into new export markets was the trigger for Managing Director Robert Cook and General Manager Yurgen Shaffer to embark on **Vision Manawatu’s Smart Business Acceleration Programme**.

Shaffer said, “As an exporter of around 90 percent of our production we are very subject to fuel costs and the exchange rate. So to be competitive on the world market we have to be smarter in the way we use technology. That has meant a re-vitalisation of our management information system so we can track job production costs and have our machinery working to optimum capacity. Plus we are continually upgrading our machinery in order to keep technological efficiency up and labour costs down. In order to keep our capital costs down we also buy secondhand machinery that we refurbish to a high standard.

“Quest has just upgraded the control gear on its CNC mill using Ampion Corp of the USA and decided to use the MDSI open CNC software platform as part of that upgrade. We have also invested heavily in other software packages that aid design and mould construction. To remain ahead we have to be able to participate in producing more technically difficult component moulds faster and cheaper than our competitors and then make high quality parts at a competitive price.”

In such a competitive market getting systems and marketing right is crucial. Shaffer said, “The Programme refocused us on the issues and gave us the support we needed to do the homework on new export markets. To grow we need to expand our customer base profitably and on an enduring basis – the right acquisition could also be part of that process. It is our intention to use our mentor to assist us in this growth.”

