

## Customer Profiles

### GENPAK Networks Multiple Facilities with eXtreme DNC over Internet

GenPak Incorporated, headquartered in Glen Falls, NY, is a giant in the food packaging business. The company has maintained its leadership position through constant innovation, expanding its product line from the hinged styrofoam containers popular at many fast food restaurant chains, to just about any type of food packaging you will come across – clear deli containers, bakery packaging and laminated plates, bowls and sandwich boxes.

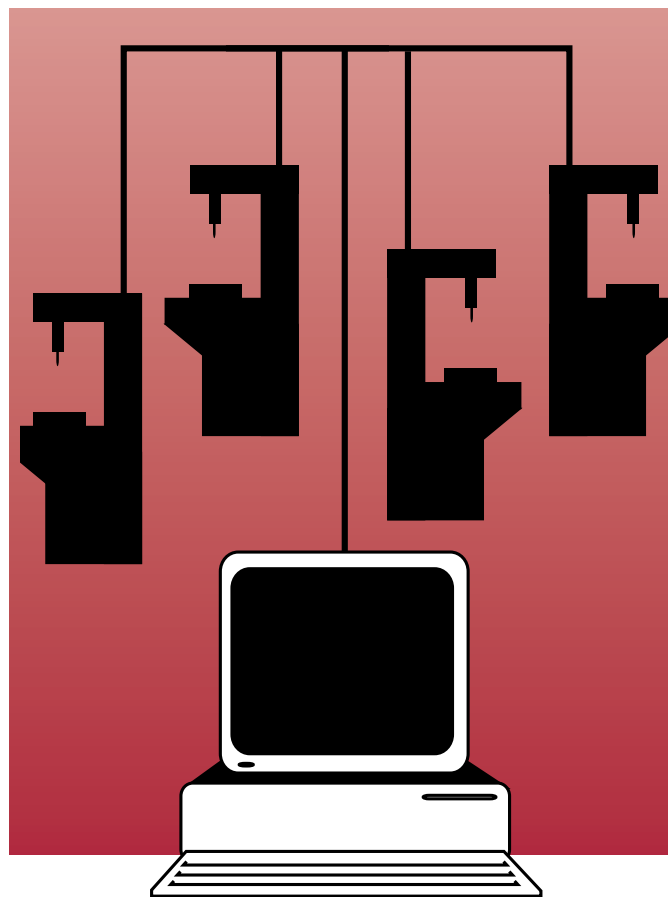
This is a company that thinks big, so when the company considered networking the CNC machines in two of its eight facilities, it looked to the biggest network in the world – the Internet.

The company utilizes LeBlond/Makino CNC 3-axis vertical machining centers to create the tooling and molds for GenPak's continuous-fed, thermoformed plastic parts. Some of these machines are located in GenPak's Middletown, NY facility, and others are in the Longview, Texas plant. Bill Crawford, director of tooling for the Middletown plant, was looking for a way to eliminate the delays and shipping costs associated with transferring CNC files on computer disk between the two facilities. This was a cumbersome process, and data corruption was sometimes a problem, he said.

Another problem was that GenPak's existing DNC system had limited editing capabilities. Mr. Crawford was frequently interrupted with requests from remote machine tool operators, who needed him to edit and send them new files.

Crawford wanted more than a DNC system linking the two plants. He wanted to tap into a single, knowledgeable vendor who could understand GenPak's entire communication system and design a network system to enhance their work flow. "We evaluated many systems, but only MACDAC Engineering proposed a flexible, total solution that would enhance our processes today and expand with our needs," said Crawford. "Another thing that impressed us about MACDAC Engineering is that they proposed using the Internet as our global communications network. That way, we could take advantage of the easy-to-use, industry-standard protocols that are available on the Internet to transfer files anywhere in the world."

GenPak's system of choice was eXtremeDNC, a 32-bit multi-tasking system for the Windows 95/98/NT environments. The software can simultaneously send, receive or DNC "drip-feed" up to 128 CNC machine tools, and maintains the file security required for ISO 9000. The latest version of eXtremeDNC has a built-in FTP server that enables you to use the network connectors that come with the latest machines to network instead of using an RS-232 connection. The network of machines can be scheduled and controlled from any computer on the network, so that operators can request files at the



machine tool and can restart part-programs from a tool break. Operators can even edit the CNC code if necessary, without disturbing Crawford.

One year after implementation, the efficiency of the GenPak operation has increased tremendously, more than Crawford can measure. NC files are transferred seamlessly from UNIX to Windows NT, and are available to the shop floor machine operators instantly with the click of a mouse. For remote locations, NC files are transferred via a secure Internet File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site, where machinists can download and upload files. "eXtremeDNC is very easy to work with. The operators like it, and it is a vast improvement over our old system. From my perspective, the biggest benefit is that we can now transfer files without any glitches," Crawford said.

He added, "MACDAC has provided us with excellent service. Their support staff are very knowledgeable and responsive. They always get right back to me within the hour."

MACDAC is a value-added reseller of eXtremeDNC software and communications networks. For more information on eXtremeDNC, call MACDAC at 860 870-8182 or visit the web site at <http://www.extremednc.com>.

For more information about GenPak L.L.C., visit their Web site at [www.genpak.com](http://www.genpak.com), or call (518) 798-9511.