

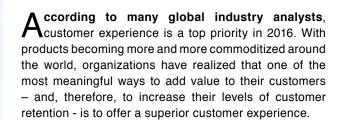






# SYSPRO: Fine-Tuning

the Customer Experience



Please don't think me immodest when I say that SYSPRO is ahead of the curve on this one. It just happens to be true. Way before social media became part of the fabric of daily life, SYSPRO was encouraging our customers to talk to each other and share their successes, queries and solutions using a number of targeted forums and user groups.

And, way before 'customer experience' became the latest growth target, SYSPRO built its reputation on its commitment and ability to sustain in-depth, long-term relationships with its customers, suppliers, partners and employees. When customers engage with SYSPRO, they receive so much more than a software solution. We truly believe in developing long-term relationships with our customers and our value added resellers, and this is what sets SYSPRO apart from the rest.

















With SYSPRO, you dictate the level of the relationship, including how you engage with us. If you prefer to have a closer relationship with your service provider, we will adapt accordingly. If you would like SYSPRO to fully manage your ERP environment from start to finish, we will do so. We provide you with a fully-informed opportunity to determine the level of the relationship, and then we adjust our products and services accordingly.

Just as our products and services are customized and personalized to meet your specific requirements, so our services work exactly the same way. And just as our software is packaged in modules so that our customers can pick and choose what they need, when they need it, we have adopted the same modular approach to our services. In fact, that approach applies to everything we

Here's a simple analogy for understanding the way SYSPRO customizes, tailors and personalizes a solution for each customer's individual needs and circumstances. Think of the GPS system you use in your car to reach an unfamiliar destination. You feed in the address and start driving, and the system recognizes where you are and starts giving you instructions. If you turn left instead of right, or miss a turn, the GPS will adjust, amend the route, and still get you to your destination. It dynamically adjusts and redirects you on the fly.

Well, that epitomizes the SYSPRO customer experience. As we work with each customer, we redirect our approach towards our products and services, applying our knowledge and expertise in an appropriate fashion for that customer, their situation and their unique requirements.

That is why I like to believe that the value we add to our customers, and our ability to simplify their success, is not just about the SYSPRO product - it is about the SYSPRO experience.

As an independent ERP vendor focused on developing a single, feature-rich product, SYSPRO is invested in developing a deep understanding of the business and management environment of our customers and the market. Our product development strategy is driven by a conscious effort to deliver the right product with the right technology at the right time using research from a wide array of resources, including long-standing customers and partners.

Every member of SYSPRO takes pride in the fact that our customers and partners enjoy a close relationship with us and, therefore, a positive, enriching customer experience. For concrete examples of this, please have a look at the customer articles in this edition of Global Talk. They illustrate this concept in a tangible, objective and credible way. ❖

Phil Duff, CEO, SYSPRO





# The Customer Experience - SYSPRO's PRIMARY FOCUS

 By Joey Benadretti, President, SYSPRO USA



SYSPRO embraces a corporate philosophy that places the customer at the forefront. This philosophy permeates the entire organization. Customers are SYSPRO'S 'reason for being' and motivation to build and maintain a world-class customer experience in the fast-moving and dynamic ERP market arena. Essentially, SYSPRO views every customer as a 'customer for life'.

Developing a deep and personal relationship with each customer is the essence of the SYSPRO customer experience. Two-way open interaction and communication remain the vital elements of formulating an understanding and maintaining a harmonious, mutually beneficial long-term relationship. Viewing the total landscape with attention to detail is essential for a solid customer experience and the impetus for achievement. It is this ability to seek and comprehend the total scenario that gives SYSPRO the intrinsic ability to build a highly reputable, measureable and satisfying customer experience, one customer at a time.

A major differential between SYSPRO and other software companies is our ability to reduce customer risk, not only in implementing the solution, but also in the relationship that develops. At SYSPRO, the executive leadership sets the vision for the customer experience by building trust throughout the SYSPRO nation in tandem with its customers, channel and partners. This blends into a single vital ecosystem that serves to nurture customer interaction, mitigate risk and build beneficial long-term relationships.



From an internal perspective, it is always rewarding to see customers benefit from leveraging the SYSPRO people, product and company. The close partnership that develops over the years results in significant business-impacting benefits for customers. These include visible and measurable results in areas encompassing the customer's go-to-market strategy, internal business processes and leveraging all the advantages of a leaner, and often greener, environment.

Day in and day out, Team SYSPRO faces and overcomes typical business challenges in a quest to create a better customer experience. This resilience and commitment to excellence is focused on staying true to the cornerstone SYSPRO brand values: Expert, Reliable, Open, Smart, Individual, Responsive and Tenacious.

These brand values are the essence of SYSPRO's inner persona and breed a customer-centric culture that is important to enabling the company to interact with honesty and integrity and to faithfully serve the success of our customers. The corporate mandate is to adhere to the brand values by being: Open, Reliable, Individual, Expert, Smart, and Tenaciously responsive to customers by helping simplify their success. This process starts internally and means that great customer service begins with servicing fellow employees internally here at SYSPRO. Only by servicing internally do we have the capability to provide high levels of service to the rest of the SYSPRO ecosystem.

SYSPRO recognizes that it is an honor to be part of a customer's success and the individual communities that are created. This is further evidenced by the fact that so many of our customers' products impact our daily lives. The reality is that products manufactured and/or distributed by SYSPRO customers are everywhere and growing. SYSPRO is constantly tasked with looking for new ways to support this growth and provide customers with software versatility. The company works diligently to provide the necessary tools for customers to gain a competitive edge in their own industries and markets.

By having implemented a SYSPRO solution, a customer gains from the synergy of the product, the ecosystem and the company. SYSPRO's true value is more than the value of the software. The value is found in the company's capable staff, channel and partners. SYSPRO is committed to staying ahead of relevant trends and technology.

To reiterate – what really makes SYSPRO different from other solutions is that the SYSPRO vision is all about an absolute focus on each individual customer. This sharp focus is the value-add that customers gain by being part of the SYSPRO nation. •

Are you getting

# FULL VALUE

from your business system?

Insight into your supply chain boosts ROI





# Decorland Goes Mobile with UPERIORSERVICE and Customization from SYSPRO



control of its stock.



Although Decorland is a long-term SYSPRO customer, having first implemented the ERP solution in 2009, its store-based staff were using Blackberries with Blackberry Enterprise Server (BES) to email Goods in Transit and Purchase Order receipting information to head office. This manual process caused extensive problems with stock-takes, inventory, accuracy and productivity.

Decorland was established in 1972 and pioneered the concept of expert décor staff within the retail environment in 1978 when its relationship with Game Discount World began. The company designs, manufactures and sells ready-to-install curtain suspension products as well as custom-made and cut-to-measure blinds. Its products are sold through the Decorland departments within Game stores across Africa.

an outward-facing way of monitoring and maintaining

Devon Trew, Decorland Business Development Executive, says: "We had extensive problems maintaining accurate stock levels and inventory because our staff in the store were using email on their Blackberry devices to communicate with head office about goods received and sales made. Stock-takes weren't accurate, our inventory wasn't live, and there were delays in communications between the stores and head office, which caused further inaccuracies."



The Decorland Executive team was introduced to SYSPRO Espresso at the SYSPRO 7 conference in Johannesburg, South Africa, in November 2013. The possibilities and potential for Decorland's unique requirements were instantly apparent, and a decision was made to implement SYSPRO Espresso across 120 stores in South Africa as well as in retail outlets in Botswana, Mozambique, Ghana, Lesotho, Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda and Nigeria.

"My eyes lit up when I saw SYSPRO Espresso," Trew says. "I saw endless possibilities for live stock in the stores, being able to bring stock in, do stock-takes, check stock levels – and control user permissions from SYSPRO. In essence, we decided to upgrade our manual Goods in Transit transfer and Purchase Order receipting processes with a live automated system."

Decorland upgraded to SYSPRO 7 to enable the SYSPRO Espresso implementation. The company opted for the standard SYSPRO Espresso Stock-Take app and the GIT Espresso app was custom developed for Decorland by Codewell under project management by SYSPRO Africa. The customized app took two weeks to develop and test.

The rollout of the mobile solution to the network of South African Game stores began in December 2013. Trew and his team implemented between 10 and 15 stores a month, and this rollout is targeted or completion during Q3 2016. The implementation of SYSPRO Espresso into the African stores will follow thereafter.

"Wherever Game goes, we go – and so does SYSPRO Espresso. We focused on South Africa first because that's our largest operation," Trew says. "The rollout has been smooth because Espresso is quick and easy to set up. The only problems we've encountered have been in terms of connectivity in rural areas, and we anticipate similar infrastructure challenges in the African territories."

Since implementing SYSPRO Espresso, the administrative burden on Decorland's head office has reduced considerably. More than 80 stores are already up and running on the new platform, and they're doing their own GIT transfers and purchase order receipts as well as performing live inventory checks. Stock-takes have also been implemented using Bluetooth scanners and are far more efficient than in the past, when regional managers were required to visit each store with printed A4 pages, count and recount every item and then go home, log on to SYSPRO and manually capture the stock levels.

"It's brought our systems alive, and that's what we want. We can now start reporting on our data," Trew says. "It's evident in the data that's coming through that our forecasting results are now clean."

SYSPRO Espresso has also been an extremely costeffective solution for Decorland, as the company has only needed to buy the Business Objects it requires. This has been particularly efficient in Decorland's retail environment, where modules such as General Ledger and Accounts Receivable are not needed.

Trew has found the support and feedback from SYSPRO hugely beneficial. "Developers and support staff are accessible and responsive — it's easy to get hold of people, and any minor issues we've had have been fixed straight away." •

SYSPRO Espresso has definitely made our business better. It's made our stock more accurate, made the SYSPRO processes work and, most importantly, it's given power to the users, making them feel that they're contributing more.

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- Devon Trew, Business Development Executive, Decorland





# Whites Group & SYSPRO

# A Tale of Two Partners



Whites Group has been providing Australians with steel, wire and fencing products since 1972. With more than 150 employees, the family-owned business stocks and distributes more SKUs in its category than any other Australian company through a network of offices, distribution centers throughout Australia and a sourcing office in Nanjing, China.

Paul Kelly, Project Director of Whites Group and one of three founding-family brothers currently working in the business, says: "We've had very long-term relationships with some of our suppliers. One of our philosophies is that we have to do things better and more efficiently to drive down costs. For the last couple of years, one of our priorities has been smarter work practices, and that's necessitated a review of our entire supply chain.

"We work with our long-term suppliers to help them understand what we need, and also to understand how they can be more efficient. Everybody wins when you eliminate waste and obsolescence. And at the end of the day, an increasingly productive supply chain helps us service our own customers in a more cost-effective and efficient way."

Whites' partnership with SYSPRO began in 2009, when the company realized that the costs and risks of its aging DOS-based manufacturing application outweighed the potential disruption of implementing a new business solution.

"It was time to move on. Among other problems, the legacy system wouldn't take updates anymore, and although it ran in Windows, it wasn't Windows compliant. We needed a state-of-the-art ERP with all the bells and whistles, such as electronic data interchange (EDI), a strong focus on Inventory and the ability to perform landed cost tracking and multi-currency calculations," Kelly says.



"In addition, the solution had to support more than 50 users across multiple sites and have extremely reliable backup and recovery capabilities. To make sure we were investing in future-proof technology, we wanted to see a documented roadmap showing the ERP's long-term development direction. And of course, one of our foremost considerations was to make sure we'd be supported by trustworthy, local expertise."

The selection process came down to SYSPRO and one other ERP package. "The other vendor came with a large team, and that didn't sit well with us. The person doing SYSPRO's pre-sales work was also the person who did the implementation. In addition, he made good suggestions in terms of enhancing our business processes, especially in terms of eliminating paperwork," Kelly points out.

Whites chose SYSPRO, and the implementation was rapid and successful. The result was improved product tracking, visibility into product and customer profit and loss data, and more efficient, streamlined business processes. Twelve months later, Whites Group was reporting a return on its ERP investment.

From SYSPRO's perspective, the partnership with Whites Group has been successful on many levels. Even beyond the PR value of a satisfied customer, Whites' drive for continuous improvement has opened channels for feedback and collaboration. Also a private, family-owned business, SYSPRO prides itself on tailoring its software to the needs of its customers. Problem-solving the demands of agile multinational companies, such as Whites Group, is critical to the evolution of the ERP application.

White's cultivation of on-site SYSPRO champions – Kelly is one himself – helps to facilitate the relationship between Whites Group and SYSPRO.

"We have a few champions," he says. "I think it is incumbent on any company using an ERP system to have in-house expertise. At the end of the day it's up to us to work out what our needs are, and to know what our ERP can do."

● WHITES
GROUP®

For a company such as Whites Group, SYSPRO champions can become true 'Seekers of Value', driving change, bridging the gap between the business and the ERP provider, and optimizing the collaborative process. "We've worked with SYSPRO on various projects, and shared our data with SYSPRO's developers. In turn, they've come back to us with improvements to the code that have made our business work better," Kelly says.

In 2014, for example, Whites Group partnered with Frauenfelder, another Australian-owned family business and a highly-respected manufacturer of fencing materials. Based in Albury, New South Wales, Frauenfelder's manufacturing expertise added instant product depth and expertise to Whites' national and international footprint. "The Frauenfelder supply arrangement necessitated a great deal of transparency and information flow between our companies. It was essentially an EDI project. Using SYSPRO applications, and with help from SYSPRO's developers, we gained full visibility into each other's stock holdings."





Whites Group's most recent project is the implementation of SYSPRO Espresso, SYSPRO's platform- and device-agnostic mobile business solution. "Our current project arose out of a warehousing issue. We were looking at incorporating, or bolting on, a warehouse management system. We wanted to use scanning technology to give us more accuracy in picking and sending out goods, as well as more accurate and efficient stock-taking," Kelly comments.

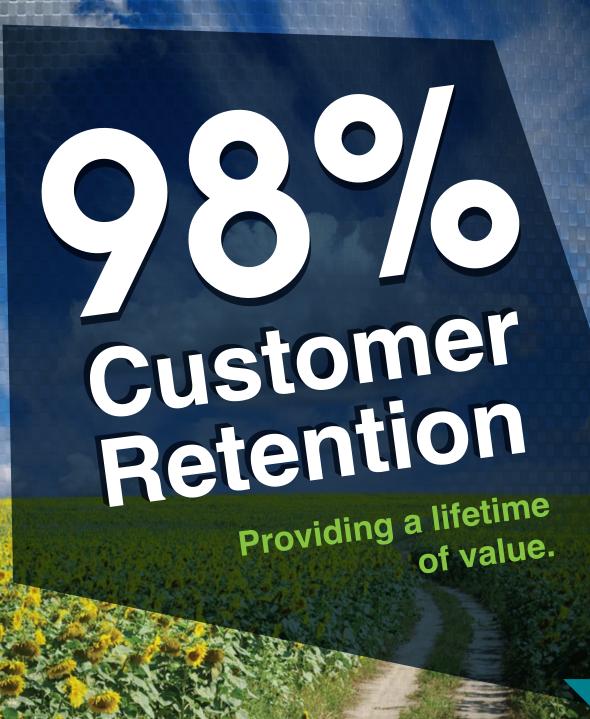
"We looked at a couple of options, but neither of them met our needs. SYSPRO Espresso, with a bit of personalization, does. Not only that, but Espresso was a less-expensive and more-effective tool. It enables us to feed warehouse data directly from our SIM card-equipped tablets into the database, using SYSPRO's native functionality."

The focus of Espresso is ubiquitous real-time information: any device, any time, any place. "This will make the order picking much more efficient, and stock taking will become a walk around the warehouse with a mobile device. With Espresso we should be able to minimize paperwork and the double-handling of pallets. In addition, think of the power this gives executives and sales people – exact, real-time information right at their fingertips. In phase two, we will see tangible benefits when integrating our shipping with Espresso. Real-time Consignment Notes and Costing of Deliveries are just some of the advantages we envisage." he says.

Kelly points to the Espresso implementation as a significant collaboration. "Implementing Espresso will be a benefit to our customers. And once the SYSPRO developer has finished personalizing the software for us, it will probably find application in other businesses as well."

It's that sort of give-and-take that makes a great relationship exceptional. "With SYSPRO, we're leveraging a very profitable partnership. If we have a problem or question we know who to call, and we know they'll take care of us," Kelly says. "Purchasing an ERP solution is not like buying a car, you don't just grab the keys and drive away. There has to be a relationship. Looking to the future, I'm excited by the fact that SYSPRO is always changing and improving. What SYSPRO offers businesses allows businesses to dream." •









# SYSPRO Brings Electronics Manufacturer Closer to CUSTOMERS

Prism Electronics has rapidly increased its customer responsiveness levels since investing in a fully-integrated SYSPRO solution from K3 Syspro. A SYSPRO customer for the past 10 years, the company has used the solution to remain highly competitive despite increased demand and customer expectations.

David Aspinall, Managing Director of Prism Electronics, says: "Over the past 10 years our business has had to adapt to changes in the wider manufacturing market. These days, our customers have far more stringent requirements than when we started this business 25 years ago. Rather than own their stock, they prefer to have products made when they need them. SYSPRO is key to our ability to keep up with this demand and become more responsive to our customers' changing needs."

Prism focuses on the manufacture of complex products in modest volumes. The complexity ranges from initial technical challenges through to logistical and supply chain management while maintaining customer quality and traceability requirements. The business is unusual in that only a small proportion of data it holds is its own, with the majority derived from customer supplied information: design specifications and product data which Prism then converts into manufacturing data to complete a job.

SYSPRO provides a central database to contain this information and present it on demand, enabling Prism to quickly search through multiple design specifications and customer details to produce reports which are used to feed the production process. The result is huge timesaving efficiencies in managing the myriad of detail inherent in high-mix, complex product manufacturing, enabling Prism to add extra value to customers.



"In our business, we cannot afford to take a one-size-fits-all approach to production. We operate differently for each individual customer and we need to be responsive, access information quickly, answer queries and run reports on demand. SYSPRO gives us the flexibility and functionality to do this," Aspinall says.

"We are totally dependent on SYSPRO for many of our business processes and it has helped us to significantly enhance our service levels all round. As we take a product into manufacture, it is the service levels we wrap around that product that make us competitive. SYSPRO enables us to delve into our database and instantly generate specific reports for ourselves or our customers - and what's more, we can do this out-the-box – we don't need to keep customizing the solution for it to remain relevant."

# Using DataSwitch to import data quickly into SYSPRO

Prism processes a variety of data in a number of different formats which need to be processed before inputting into SYSPRO. With a large number of components to process, customer information to input, product variants to refer to, inventory levels to manage, Bills Of Materials to produce, and works order control information to process, Prism is accelerating its data entry processing by using K3 Syspro's own purpose-built integration and data manipulation tool, DataSwitch.

"A challenging aspect of our business is that much of our data is supplied by our customers, and DataSwitch gives us the flexibility to import information in many file types into SYSPRO in a form that the system will recognize and accept, saving us lots of keyboard entry time and removing a potential source of errors," Aspinall comments.

"We've run quite a few trials over the past 10 years to explore SYSPRO's full capabilities and we keep finding new ways of using the system to further our competitive advantage. For example, we now automatically email our outgoing communications such as invoices, statements and purchase orders from within SYSPRO to customers and suppliers. These processes may only save us seconds per transaction over manual processes, but those seconds add up to make a big difference over a period of time."

# Looking to the future with SYSPRO

Prism Electronics makes a conscious effort to adopt the latest version of SYSPRO as soon as its schedules allow, and it has already benefitted from a number of enhancements to the system. As the business looks forward, SYSPRO will continue to play a key role in helping to further develop Prism's business model to keep it competitive in a demanding market. •





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We are already looking at the next version of SYSPRO. What we like about SYSPRO is the fact that it is continually being developed and enhanced, and these improvements are always passed onto users. In particular, the mobile capabilities of SYSPRO appeal to us and will help our workers to become more effective within the factory and boost our productivity even further. Certainly, SYSPRO has kept us competitive over the past decade and we expect it to do so for many more years to come.

- David Aspinall, Managing Director, Prism Electronics

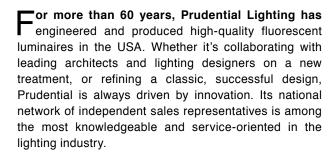




# Shines a Light

for Prudential Lighting

By Jaime Ditterline,Prudential Lighting



Prudential's ERP journey has been quite an adventure. The first ERP system that Prudential chose was not SYSPRO - we first went live with Oracle. The fit was never ideal. It was obvious that Prudential was a small fish in Oracle's very large Tier 1 ERP pond. In order to make the system work, we ended up putting a lot of money into consulting and customization fees. What resulted was something of a Humpty Dumpty system that, if we were lucky, managed an entire week without collapsing and requiring assistance from more consultants to put back together.

We lived with this system, adding in pieces here and there as we could make them fit. We could tell that it was not ideal, but it was a case of knowing your enemy. It was the system we knew. In 2010 it became very apparent that we needed to get out.





Part of our issue with Oracle was that it had a license structure that is not friendly to the mid-size or smaller manufacturer. Rather than a concurrent user structure, Oracle utilizes a named user structure. For a smaller company that had been set up on Oracle many years before without an in-house person dedicated to its maintenance, this was a disaster. We ended up with many users named for modules that had never used the module, users that had left the company, and users that needed temporary access that had never been removed as a named user. Each one required a license fee every year, for each module. Long story short, it became cost prohibitive to continue with Oracle with the licensing structure. The licensing issue became the final push to get us to embrace a new system.

While researching ERP companies, we found SYSPRO through a simple Internet search. We reached out via the web site and immediately heard back from SYSPRO. We spoke with SYSPRO and set up a JAD session with the implementation team.

From the moment the JAD team walked through the door it was apparent that we were no longer small fish. We were treated with respect as the team took the time to not only understand how we did our business, but also why we did it in the manner that we do. They listened to every issue we had with our current system, they proposed how things could work in SYSPRO, and they outlined a path to success.

We had a short window of opportunity to choose an ERP system and to implement it. SYSPRO had the approach nailed down for just this scenario. Working with the implementation team, Prudential was able to set up the system, scrub and then convert data from Oracle into SYSPRO, implement a bar coding and handheld solution and train users in just four months.

Prudential Lighting offers a wide range of catalogued parts with a huge amount of options for every fixture. We also offer custom luminaires designed as partners with our customers. This leads us to a daunting amount of stock codes to deal with. SYSPRO worked with us to organize the data and helped us come up with ways to maintain counts and organization of over 140,000 stock codes.

Due to the variety in our catalogue and our make-to-order environment, we had to come up with a way to enter our orders without sorting through thousands of stock codes. The solution we chose was to utilize the Product Configurator. We had a unique method of creating the descriptions we use for our products which consists of horizontally concatenating all of the options that the customer has chosen into one unique description for that product. This was not something that appeared to be immediately available using SYSPRO. We found that by thinking outside of the box, we were able to utilize what was in the box with SYSPRO. The customer is not expected to bend to the software; the team at SYSPRO is always up to the challenge of making the software work for the customer.

The difference has been astounding. Within the first week, it was apparent that the right choice had been made. The SYSPRO system is stable. No longer are we spending a fortune on consultants and IT support just to keep the system running, like we were with Oracle. No longer are we battling our own customizations. What we gained by switching to SYSPRO was freedom to do our business and have a system working for us rather than working to make the system function.

SYSPRO utilizes a completely different approach to business than the Tier 1 vendors do. No customer is a small fish to SYSPRO. Our experience has been a partnership. Both companies are invested in making Prudential Lighting a success. When issues come up, a simple phone call or email leads directly to support from SYSPRO.

About a year ago we had a system-wide hardware disaster. Our servers failed and it was at that point that we found out that our backups were not being written correctly. When we contacted SYSPRO in a panic, they immediately sprang into action to help us. We spent a week recovering data, rebuilding our system and getting caught up. Every step of the way, they were there with us. SYSPRO USA had us in touch with others on the international team and we had employees staying late with us, helping us over the weekend. We had our hands held every step of the way during that extremely trying time. SYSPRO went above and beyond the call of duty to guide us and get us back on track. If we were still a small fish in a large pond, there is no way we would ever have gotten that attention and care.

For any company that is feeling the pain of being the small fish in the large Tier 1 ERP company pond, consider SYSPRO as the alternative. There is no reason to continue to try to make your company fit the mold that is set by these companies. Although they may work well for some, for others it is frustrating and costly to try to fit into their models. SYSPRO has been the perfect solution for Prudential Lighting. We gave up paying third-party companies to bridge the gap between how the software worked and what we needed. What we gained was a stable system and a partnership that is beyond compare. ❖



Jaime Ditterline has worked with Prudential Lighting for 10 years. She is primarily in charge of implementing and managing software solutions. She is the in-house Crystal Reports writer and in charge of maintaining the SYSPRO solution. She believes that most companies would benefit from an ERP solution and that there is great opportunity for employees to advance in their careers as they embrace the task of implementing software.





## **Africa and Middle East**

Africa and Middle East
SYSPRO Africa
Block A
Sunninghill Place
9 Simba Road
Sunninghill
Johannesburg
2191
South Africa
Tel: +27 (0) 11 461 1000
Email: info@za.syspro.com

SYSPRO Canada 4400 Dominion Street Suite 215 Burnaby (Vancouver)
British Columbia Canada V5G 4G3

Tel: +1 (604) 451 8889 Toll free: +1 888 259 6666 Email: info@ca.syspro.com

**Asia Pacific** 

SYSPRO Oceania
Suite 1102, Level 11
201 Miller Street
North Sydney NSW 2060
Australia
Tel: +61 (2) 9870 5555
Toll free: +1 300 882 311
Email: info@au.syspro.com

# Canada

SYSPRO Asia 8 Eu Tong Sen Street #19-91 The Central Singapore 059818 Tel: +65 6256 1921 E-mail: info@sg.syspro.com

# **USA and Americas**

SYSPRO USA and Americas 959 South Coast Drive, Suite 100 Costa Mesa California 92626 USA

Tel: +1 (714) 437 1000 Toll free: +1 800 369 8649 Email: info@us.syspro.com

# **UK and Europe**

SYSPRO Europe Baltimore House 50 Kansas Avenue Salford Quays Manchester **United Kingdom** M50 2GL Tel: +44 161 876 4498 Email: info@eu.syspro.com

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