GANG-NAIL GUIDELINES No.96

ANOTHER MITEK ADVANTAGE

VISIONARY, PRAGMATIST OR LAGGARD?

By ANDREW SCANE
IT & Computer Services Manager
MiTek Australia Limited

It is a commonly accepted fact that different people adapt to new technology at different rates.

There have been many studies and highly regarded publications that describe the sequence of the adoption of new technologies.

Early adopters are known as 'Technology Enthusiasts' or 'Visionaries', late adopters are generally described as 'Pragmatists' or 'Conservatives' and finally there are the 'Sceptics' or 'Laggards'.

Studies show that the majority are 'Pragmatists' or 'Conservatives' and only about 13 per cent are early adapters.

Although there is risk in adopting technology early, it has been shown that the 'Technology Enthusiasts' often gain the competitive edge.

Over time, others follow and the technology is adopted throughout the industry.

Our challenge is to keep a close eye on each area of our business to see where emerging technologies can be implemented to improve our efficiency.

Here are some of the recent trends:

Office

In the office the developments in the electronic transfer of information have changed the way we operate, and new opportunities regularly present themselves.

More of us are dealing with our suppliers and customers electronically (e-commerce), business to business (B2B). The benefits are significant as transactions are convenient, automated and require a minimal amount of manual processing.

Other benefits include reduced overheads, improved response time, order tracking and automatic advice of availability or delivery either directly, by email or even via SMS.

Another developing trend is in the electronic exchange of architectural plans.

Although generally available in electronic format now, we are seeing the major CAD applications implement new file formats that allow the ability to share information for construction and facilities management (interoperability) with software applications, including truss design software.

As the support for these new file formats increase, there will be major time and cost savings for truss plants, particularly in the input process for roof, wall and floor components.

Manufacturing

The installation of new technology will continue to be a major factor in improving output and reducing costs of truss plant production - a concept well appreciated by many in the industry.

are continually changing and should be evaluated and re-evaluated over time.

An example is the use of projectors to display manufacturing information for truss production.

The brightness of projectors has improved and the costs have reduced, now making them a viable tool for the display of information over truss jigs.

Other devices, that are being trialled, and which will have an impact on the way we produce in the future, include wearable PCs with various display options, and even robotics.

Production Management

The number of truss plants that are using software to manage, schedule and track production continues to grow.

With increased computerisation in the factory, integration of equipment and the introduction of new management software, production information can now flow back from workstations and equipment to management software that can generate real time costing, planning and production information.

The introduction of wireless devices, such as wearable key pads, improves the recording of progress at workstations and has many advantages over entry via the keyboard at the workstation.

Are You a Visionary?

Early adoption of new technology does involve an element of risk.

Ironically we can now more accurately
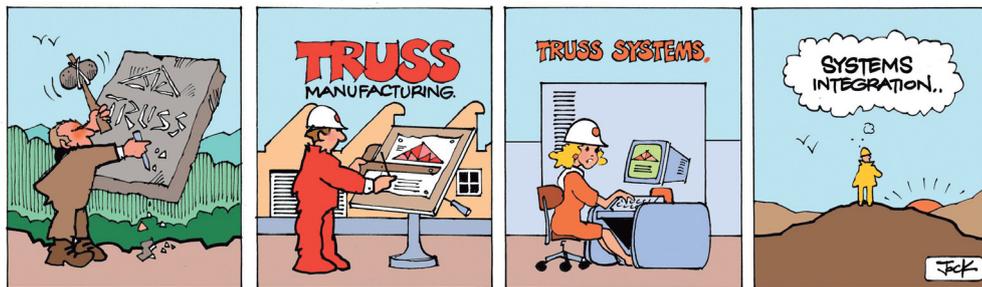
LAGGARD - PRAGMATIST - EARLY ADOPTER - VISIONARY.

Cost of this new technology is, however, a major consideration and the challenge is to evaluate what is on offer and then implement those options that will be of maximum benefit in your plant.

It is not unusual to find devices that were once regarded as unsuitable due to cost and questionable reliability, which have now become suitable to a production environment.

Technology and the associated costs

evaluate new technology using technology itself as a result of the amount of data that is generated by most of the systems used for our office processes, production management and tracking, particularly when they are integrated with the manufacturing equipment.

Making decisions will certainly be easier in the future but don't let this be an excuse to become a late adopter, or maybe even a 'Laggard' - better to be a 'Visionary' and reap the rewards!

GANG-NAIL...another MiTek advantage