



# STAR GARMENT

## CASE STUDY

# STAR GARMENT Advances Manufacturing Productivity and Efficiency

**STAR**  
A Komar company



**1.2M+**  
PIECES PRODUCED MONTHLY



**14**  
MANUFACTURING PLANTS



**8,000+**  
EMPLOYEES

**Star Garment Group** is no stranger to problem solving and transformation. Since 1978, this Sri Lanka-based business has been transforming ideas into products for leading brands. Star, which joined the Komar family of companies in 2016, is a full-service provider of fashion apparel across a broad range of product categories. In 2020, Star reached one of its brightest achievements yet: 14 factories were certified as carbon neutral, a first in Sri Lanka and an outstanding accomplishment on the global scale.

Along the way, Star has faced challenges, adapted and improved to stay competitive. Whether it's 3D design or the newest sewing machinery, Star continually invests in technology to ensure quality without

compromise. In recent years, Star invested in factory floor digitalization by adding the **CGS BlueCherry® Shop Floor Control (SFC)** solution. This case study will discuss how the SFC technology:

- Enables Star's management team to make informed decisions, faster.
- Delivers access to real-time shop floor information, leading to faster problem resolution, unproductive time reduction, better productivity and cost reduction.

## ■ CHALLENGES BEFORE SHOP FLOOR DIGITALIZATION

Before Star rolled out SFC technology, the company relied on a batch process to obtain plant floor data. There was a day's

lag time between when events occurred in the factory and when management received information about that day's production. Throughout the workday, supervisors and mechanics on the factory floor would troubleshoot problems and make decisions based on experience, instincts and informal processes. For example, they would notice work-in-process (WIP) building up at one workstation due to a machine problem at the workstation next in the production line. Or they would discover at shift change that an operator would be absent that day. In either situation, they would have to drop everything and rearrange sewing associates on a line to ensure all essential operations are performed and bottlenecks are resolved. ►

Then the next day, the management team would receive the prior day's production report and see how manufacturing progressed against forecasts. But they were always looking in the rear-view mirror, and there was only so much they could do at that point about lost productivity and broken machines. With reliance on informal processes to notice and address issues such as bottlenecks, Star was aware of the reasons for manufacturing setbacks, but it had no quantifiable data available to accurately measure the size and causes of the problems. As the saying goes, you can't manage what you can't measure.

#### ■ RESULTS AFTER SHOP FLOOR CONTROL TECHNOLOGY

Today, Star knows immediately when a machine goes down and a sewing operator goes into non-standard time. It knows

precisely how long it took to repair that machine and get the operator back to work. When they learn an operator is out sick, supervisors can consult the SFC solution on hand-held tablets to get quick recommendations for how best to rebalance a line. They also can plan ahead for scheduled absences. Operators see a real-time view of their own throughput and that of their production line, including whether their pace is on track to hit pay incentives.

All of this newfound visibility and capability is made possible by Star's implementation of **CGS BlueCherry® Shop Floor Control**. Unlike before, the management team now has visibility into all this data, from their offices or remotely, in real-time, as it's happening on the plant floor. Leaders are more engaged and aware of critical issues and can better analyze recurring issues to get to the root causes of persistent problems, such as why some styles take longer than expected to make. ▶



**The real-time data enables people at various levels, from production workers to supervisors to management, to make informed vs. informal decisions,” said Star Managing Director Arumugampillai Sukumaran. “Now we can solve issues as they happen. When you make decisions quickly, obviously your productivity goes up. It’s a chain reaction. Real-time decision-making allows us to make quick decisions in real-time. That allows us to solve problems on the spot. That on-the-spot problem solving ends up reducing off-standard hours. That ends up with higher productivity, and obviously that higher productivity ends up in a reduction of costs. It’s a chain.**



Before using **CGS BlueCherry® Shop Floor Control**, Star did not know exactly how much off-standard time occurred during a shift or day. After the company started measuring this time, it was shocked by how it added up. “It was unbelievable — the number of off-standard minutes and hours every day,” Sukumaran said. By gaining greater visibility to this non-productive time, Star’s team jumps on solving the causes of the problems much more quickly. **Since rolling out SFC, Star has eliminated 90 percent of off-standard time while gaining double-digit productivity increases.**

The SFC solution integrates seamlessly with General Sewing Data (GSD) standard values for every garment operation Star associates perform. Information about individual operator skill levels also is stored in the system. **Shop Floor Control** automatically synthesizes this data to help managers plan production and balance manufacturing lines for optimal output. During the planning stage, before a production run starts, they can identify skills gaps likely to lead to line imbalances, such as WIP buildup at certain operations. In this way, Star proactively prevents these issues by rearranging associates and/or operations for a more efficient manufacturing flow. For example,

while one style makes its way down the line, Star leverages SFC to plan how each line will be setup for the next three styles. Star now has clearer, real-time visibility to order status, by individual products or batches. Managers can see at a glance how much of an order has been cut, sewn, inspected, bagged or packed for shipment. This prevents last-minute surprises. Said Sukumaran, “It helps with transparency. You can see exactly where the order is from your office.”

If a quality problem is identified during an inspection, management can quickly trace the issue back to specific operations and associates, assign rework and catch errors before hundreds are made.

With SFC, each production line has two or three large-screen monitors that

display real-time information about the line’s absenteeism, off-standard time and status toward meeting incentive production targets. Production associates and supervisors work hand-in-hand to resolve issues as quickly as possible so that everyone has the best opportunity for higher earnings. “It creates a culture of helping each other,” Sukumaran said.

For Star Garment Group, **CGS Blue Cherry® Shop Floor Control** has shed a scientific light on causes and effects of time lost to bottlenecks, machine downtime, absenteeism and other issues, while giving management valuable real-time visibility to production status. **SFC is one of the tools that helps Star live up to its slogan: Sourcing and Manufacturing at Its Best.**

For over 35 years, CGS's BlueCherry® Enterprise Suite provides clients with a powerful, comprehensive set of tools to drive their fundamental business processes. With a community of 500+ customers, 250,000+ active users and implementations in more than 20 countries, we've built and actively facilitate a collaborative network of CGS experts and client users that's unmatched in the industry.

**250,000+**  
250,000+ users  
worldwide

**20+**  
Present in 20+  
countries

**500+**  
A community of 500+  
customers globally

Focusing on the needs of high-growth organizations operating in the consumer lifestyle products and retail industries, our solutions have the built-in capacity to address the needs of all core management, planning, product development, manufacturing, logistics, finance and sales functions.

A flexible solution that is available in the cloud and on-premise, **BlueCherry Enterprise Suite** empowers omnichannel businesses globally with over 600 integration partners ranging from 3D product development, retailers, eCommerce, logistics, third-party warehouses, and manufacturing facilities.

With end-to-end capabilities, the BlueCherry Enterprise Suite includes:

- Product Lifecycle Management
- Enterprise Resource Planning
- Shop Floor Control
- B2B eCommerce
- Omnichannel Warehouse Mgmt.
- Omnichannel Merchandise Planning
- Business Intelligence
- Business Integrations

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