

## **Plasmasters Case Study - Another Valued Hi-tech Tooling Customer**

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Plasmasters is a Brisbane-based plastics injection moulding company. Established in 1985 by Richard McCleary, the company now has 14 moulding machines ranging in capacity from 25 to 500 tonnes and can process a range of plastics from HDPE through to some of the more exotic high heat polymers with specialised properties. With a fully accredited ISO9001:2008 QA system, whether producing proprietary products or custom mouldings, the focus is always on quality.

### **A decision made to outsource tooling requirements**

In the late 2000s, Plasmasters opted to close their in-house tool shop in favour of outsourcing their tooling requirements and they count Hi-tech Tooling as one of their key suppliers.

“We encourage our clients to take a holistic view of the lifetime cost of the product, rather than focus on initial capital cost”, Richard said. “While the cost maybe a little higher, we know that by investing in tooling of the quality provided by Hi-tech, the unit cost of the product will be lower over its lifetime.”

Among the many products that Plasmasters manufacture they recently developed two new products – a solar light and a bus timetable case.

### **New product: solar light – tooling sourced from Hi Tech Brisbane**

The solar light consists of three separate components. Ensuring the quality of the finished product, particularly the lens, was of paramount importance. “The tooling was critical”, Richard said, “but it had to be affordable, which meant looking overseas”.

Having dealt with Hi-tech for many years, Richard was aware of the long standing relationships Hi-tech has with suppliers from China and knew they would manage all aspects of communication throughout the procurement process. This provided Richard with the reassurance that the tooling would be up to the quality standard required.

50% of these tools were made in China with the critical parts being made in Brisbane

The solar lights have now been in production for 12 months and the tools have met all expectations.

### **New product: bus timetable case – tooling sourced from quality Chinese suppliers**

The valve-gated tooling required for the bus timetable case was also sourced through Hi-tech from their Chinese suppliers.

Richard commented that this tool provided the easiest production start-up of any product ever produced by Plasmasters. Any potential issues were sorted out before the tooling was delivered so it was a matter of installing it in the press and starting

production. "This has demonstrated the importance of having excellent communication with overseas suppliers if you are going to use them", Richard said. "Hi-tech have made this possible through relationships they have developed over many years."

### **The experience of sourcing tooling from China**

Plasmasters has no concerns at all about sourcing high quality tooling from China. However, Richard recognises the critical role that Hi-tech Tooling plays in the value chain

1. Hi-tech know which Chinese suppliers to deal with and know the specialist capabilities of each one.
2. They know how to communicate with their Chinese suppliers regarding the required technical specifications.
3. They manage the procurement process from start to finish.
4. Hi-tech also provide local support for any maintenance or repairs the tools may eventually require.

"Our experience with sourcing Chinese tooling through Hi-tech has been nothing but positive", Richard said. "We can access high quality tooling at reasonable prices. And we don't need to concern ourselves with all the potential issues associated with off shore purchasing."