



Bruno Independent Living Aids Improves Work Process with FFD's LockStep & Sequence Software

Wheelchairs, scooters, and power chairs help people with limited mobility lead independent lives. Equally important are the mechanisms that move or transport these devices in the home or in vehicles. Mechanical break downs or structural failures can have serious consequences and greatly limit the freedom of these individuals.



Bruno Independent Living Aids is a leading global manufacturer of personal mobility device transportation equipment. Since 1984, the company has become the industry standard for unwavering quality workmanship. Headquartered in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, Bruno is known worldwide for its vehicle vertical lifts, turning automotive seats and residential rail stair and vertical platform lifts.

As Steve Ruder, Bruno process improvement specialist says, "We are not the cheapest, but our products are the best out of the box. We build it right the first time, every time."

Work Instructions Make the Difference

Product documentation and reproducibility and lean manufacturing processes are the keys to success for Bruno. Ruder says the company relies on easy to use work

instructions to defend its leadership position in a very competitive market. All of Bruno's products are complex, requiring 30 to 80 pages of work instructions to assemble a single unit.

After 17 years with the company including a position as Plant Manager, Ruder was promoted to the newly created position of Process Improvement Specialist. "About five years ago, this new position was created to standardize the work process," Ruder says. "At the time, we used work instructions software with a Microsoft Word macro overlay. It was very tedious and had the same Word problems consumers encounter every day, but compounded by having to document very large work instructions."

The problems included difficult to work with place holders, auto numbering, auto sequencing, allowing certain pictures to be resized, arrows and diagrams. Information had to be kept in a certain order and it could take hours to delete one small component.



It didn't take Ruder long to look for a better way to document Bruno's work processes. After a web search, he found a software package called Sequence from FFD, Inc., Knoxville, Tenn. The software was fully collaborative and included ERP integration. While it offered a viable solution, it was more than the company needed at the time. Ruder continued his search for the perfect work instructions software.

LockStep Software a Hit

The following year, Ruder received a call from FFD Founder and President Barry Lucas. Lucas told Ruder that FFD had developed a new work instructions software package that offered many of the same features as Sequence but, without the enterprise software price.

"Barry said try a free download of LockStep software and within the first four days of the free 15 day trial I was sold," Ruder says. "It cut the time I spent on work instructions in half. I could take pictures on the floor and immediately drop them in to the document with a direct digital camera image capture feature. It was amazing."

Bruno's operators and assemblers also immediately took advantage of LockStep's intuitive graphical authoring interface, full revision control and pre-formatted PDF deployment. Additionally, text, picture and spreadsheet integrated editors are available to Ruder and the Bruno team.

"The software's auto-archive feature eliminates the potential of producing an out of date document," Ruder says. "Once you open a document and redo it, the software automatically changes the revision and will not allow you to put an old document on the floor."

Bruno Upgrades Again

Ruder was soon promoted to his current position of process improvement specialist and assumed additional responsibilities for new product development and engineering chain support. He and another process improvement specialist continued to use LockStep software for all cells and stations with only one data base.

"FFD came up with a very desirable Sequence upgrade package that allowed us to become fully collaborative using one data base, but not the full blown enterprise environment. Now we can make engineering changes on the same data base without effecting what the other person is doing."

Today, Bruno's maintenance staff is also using the Sequence software upgrade to manage its total productive maintenance (TPM) documents. The software helps them service and maintain their machines. "Sequence tells them to grease here, clean this, check there," Ruder says. "It is a great TPM tool."

Additionally, operators and assembly line technicians can now easily work on other cells or components. The company performs many rotations, especially on the accessibility elevator lines. There is a good chance an operator may not have experience with a certain cell or component. Ramp up to full production is very short. Also, when there is a new employee, he or she can look at the pictures while watching what the technician is doing. When they are ready to go on their own, they use that same document.

Bruno Independent Living Aids Improves with LockStep and Sequence Enterprise



SEQUENCE

Customer Success Brief

“A work instruction that used to take me three days to complete now only takes a day,” Ruder says. “I’ve been preaching LockStep and Sequence software for years. When other companies tour our plant, I tell them to do the 15 day free trial like I did. I guarantee they will own the software before the trial is up.”

LockStep

Designed for the manufacturing organization that needs rapid, pictorial based work instruction authoring and paper deployment without the hassle of formatting and a direct upgrade path to an enterprise solution as needs grows.

Sequence Enterprise

Designed for the manufacturing enterprise needing work instructions that are collaboratively authored, fully integrated with ERP/PLM/MES and deployed in a real time, interactive paperless environment.



SEQUENCE

Customer Success Brief

Bruno Independent Living Plus Improves with Sequence and Sequence Enterprise