

CHANGE TO ELECTRONIC LOGS! How you can Increase Productivity in your Industry Control Room

By St James Software

Dated: May 28, 2008

The j5 Logbook is a corporate wide electronic logbook designed for Industrial Operating Conditions. The j5 Logbook replaces the paper-based logbook that is typically situated in most control rooms or technical and maintenance workshops.

Let's start with a horror story!

Something went horribly wrong yesterday.

Production was down and blood pressures were up.

Maintenance people were rushing around with a wild look in their eyes.

There was a spillage in Area 2. The quality was way below spec and.... no one seems to know what started it all!

The production manager barks at you...

"Find out what happened so it won't happen again!"

A quick look at the trends... Ouch! It is not pretty but what started it all off? You gallop off double time to the control room.

"WE don't know", the operators say "it wasn't OUR shift!"

Your eyes fall on a grubby little notebook in the corner of the room... The ubiquitous Operator Logs.

You are in luck! The operator on yesterday's shift is a regular Steven King. A bit difficult to read because of the coffee stains but there it is in black and white (and brown) - "High pressure spike on main filter. Should be changed out."

A light bulb turns on in your mind! So Dr. Watson, it is elementary, the operator saw it, he noted it just before finishing his shift and no one put two and two together (let alone saw the entry) to avoid the inevitable sorry tale of woe!

What do we stand to gain by going electronic?

Surprisingly, stories such as the one above are all too common even on supposedly modern sites where every tag is scrupulously monitored.

Why is it that some of the most important data..."what the operator saw and did" is not logged?

So you say, "Why don't we just get the operator to log the data into the computer and arrange it so that everyone can have access to it on the network?"

It sound too easy, doesn't it? Well, with a good electronic logging package it is just that - EASY. But...

- Will people use it? You bet!
- Will it save production? Yup!
- Will it mean we can avoid disruptions? Yes Sir!
- Will it mean everyone will know what the control room is doing? Right!
- So the fiasco in the story above would have been avoided? Exactly! Both the incoming shift superintendent and the maintenance manager would have seen the Mr. King's entry on their screens or in the changeover report and the future would have been very different!
- Is it expensive? Nope!

In fact, the moment you put in an electronic logging system, you will suddenly notice that everyone on site is aware of the pulse of the process and they are all starting to make informed decisions.

But an Industrial Operator Log Package is much more than just a replacement for your existing "hard paper" log. Much, much more.

We put together a quick wish list of what we would like? *Please read on...*

What do we want from an electronic logging package?

So, if we are going to replace the paper based Log Book with an electronic Log Book, what are the functions we would be looking for?

Our wish list would probably look something like this:

- **Easy to Use:** Our operators will only use the new Log Book if it is at least as easy to use as their existing log book AND they can see a benefit in it.
- **Networkable and Affordable:** Instead of having to track down the information by phoning or physically hunting it down, we should be able to find it directly using our Intranet Browser on our computer in our own offices.
- **Configurable:** Every site has different requirements; no two sites are alike. The electronic logbook must be highly configurable to satisfy our needs. I.e.:
 - *Look and Feel:* We want to be able to select the fields we want displayed, the levels of priorities, the color coding, the format of the date etc.
 - *Fields and Structure:* We want to be able to add new codes for the different kinds of logs, add new sort fields, specify the options for different fields so that the operator can select them from a combo box etc. And we want to be able to do all this without changing any code.
- **Minimal Administration:** We may quickly have 10, 20 or 30 users all having access to the LogBook so we want the system to support floating licenses so that anyone can get the info. And we don't want to have to load any software on the user computers. I.e. we want a true Zero Client Application.
- **Database of Your Choice:** If you are going to store the logs electronically, we may as well have them stored in a database that you can integrate with the rest of our system. Now we can start tying together things like the Quality data with the Operator Logs into a single report. Or start getting statistics on how often a particular problem occurs. Above all, we want the information to be accessible via our normal skill set.
- **Configurable User Personalities:** We should be able to give different users different capabilities depending on who they are. For example, some users should be only able to add logs for certain areas, some users should only be able to see certain logs, others may need to be logged off at the end of a shift etc. What we need is a flexible, industrial user management system.
- **Multiple Log Books:** Instead of having just one place where logs can be entered, we now have the opportunity for logs to be entered by many more people. E.g. we could have our lab people entering information or our maintenance people or even have operators in remote sites entering the information. Because the logbooks are networked, the information would be easily tied together to see correlations etc.
- **Searching and Filtering:** We want to be able to quickly and easily find the particular log that we are looking for. It must be possible, for example to type in keywords like "Filter 3" and to immediately see all the records relating to Filter 3.

If you are interested in taking the Log Book idea further, have a look at the next section. It is an easy way to get started.

j5LogBook: An easy way to get started...

- j5LogBook is a corporate wide electronic logbook designed for Industrial conditions.
- j5LogBook is designed to efficiently collect and distribute the information in real-time to the complete spectrum of personnel who need this information. (Managers, Supervisors, Maintenance Engineers, Technical Personnel, Process Engineers etc.)
- j5LogBook is also completely configurable so that it can be made to fit the special requirements of virtually any Industrial Site.

Electronic Logs Prototyping Offer

Prototyping: How to get all the answers before you commit!

How does the Prototyping Offer work?

1. You email us a brief description of what you are looking for in a logging package for your site. (A spreadsheet or Word file is fine).
2. We create a fully working prototype of the application to your requirements and make that available to you on a secure web connection.
3. You have a fully working system that meets your special requirements in your environment for a period of 30 days.

You won't have to spend a cent, make a commitment or download, install or configure any software!

Lets summarize what's in the Prototyping Offer:

- Electronic logs configured to your requirements in an up and running state at no cost to your company.
- Secure access to the software where as many of your fellow employees as is required can log in and use the system.
- An on-line support facility to make sure the application is up and running at all times.
- A facility to move the site to your own computer and continue the use of the same application if you decide to purchase the license.
- A (growing) family of software applications to choose from for your process environment. All the applications are pure web based and only require a Browser like Internet explorer or Firefox to run. The applications too will run on Oracle, SQL Server, MySQL or MS Access.

You can request your FREE Prototype by emailing us at info@sjsoft.com or contact us at the following numbers:

###

About St James Software:

We are a privately owned Software company with International affiliates and International Customers. Our staff is a team of qualified, experienced engineers and programmers committed to the development of hardened industrial applications that we can provide at reasonable prices.

We are 100% devoted to the Industrial fields and spend 100% of our time meeting the needs of Industries that are looking to improve their processes through the use of computer systems.

Category	Energy, Industrial, Software
Tags	electronic logbook, logbook, shift logbook, industrial logbook, logbooks, process control, logbook software, control log
Email	Click to email author
Phone	919-424-4414

Address 920 Main Campus Drive
Venture II, Suite 101
City/Town Raleigh
State/Province North Carolina
Zip 27606
Country United States