

## A successful collaboration: Centre de productique intégrée du Québec (CPIQ) and Portes Lemieux



# Portes Lemieux: The Art of Innovating!

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**Some would claim that there's no way to renew the door industry. Think again: Portes Lemieux, a door manufacturer, is living proof that the only limits to technological innovation are those of your imagination, as attested by its recent collaboration with the Centre de productique intégrée du Québec (CPIQ).**

Previously, ordering a door from a manufacturer involved hand-delivering a set of dimensions that was then used to create the product. As can easily be imagined, there was a huge risk of error on the part of intermediaries and the individual door maker.

Thanks to a software program designed by Portes Lemieux, customers can now customize the doors of their dreams from their home or workplace. They simply have to enter a certain number of data into an interactive input screen, such as the desired type of wood, mouldings, and type of pane or panel. All the data required for producing this door are then uploaded and automatically distributed throughout the business's computerized management system. Portes Lemieux has taken this concept even further and now offers an automated production system.

This accomplishment was made possible thanks to Raynald Hainse, a **CPIQ** project manager and expert in the programming of specialized equipment. Hainse analyzed the functions of Portes Lemieux's numerically controlled machines and associated software for the purpose of automatically programming this equipment. As the various units were isolated from one another, they were used to only one



tenth of their capacity. After analyzing these highly complex processes, he developed and perfected an automated parametric programming process. In short, he came up with an efficient, economical way of making all these machines and software work in sync!

Thanks to these efforts, close to 85% of production will now be automated. The remaining 15% will continue to be made by hand. As a result, the business will be able to offer much shorter delivery times. The industry standard is one to two months, but Portes Lemieux guarantees delivery in under one week to retailers under the RONA banner and ten business days in Canada and the United States. "With manpower being more expensive and scarce in the West than in a number of other countries, being competitive means being more efficient. The ability to quickly deliver a customized product represents a clear competitive advantage," asserts Portes Lemieux.

As for the researcher, he was positively delighted with his collaboration with the Windsor, Quebec-based manufacturer: "It's been interesting working with these people. They're well organized and take calculated risks to improve the performance of their business. When you work with partners who have some expertise you can contribute to, there's no limit to how far you can go."

This desire to innovate is the core of Portes Lemieux's philosophy. From the company's inception, management has continually scanned the horizon for new technologies – and has increased its sales exponentially as a result. □

