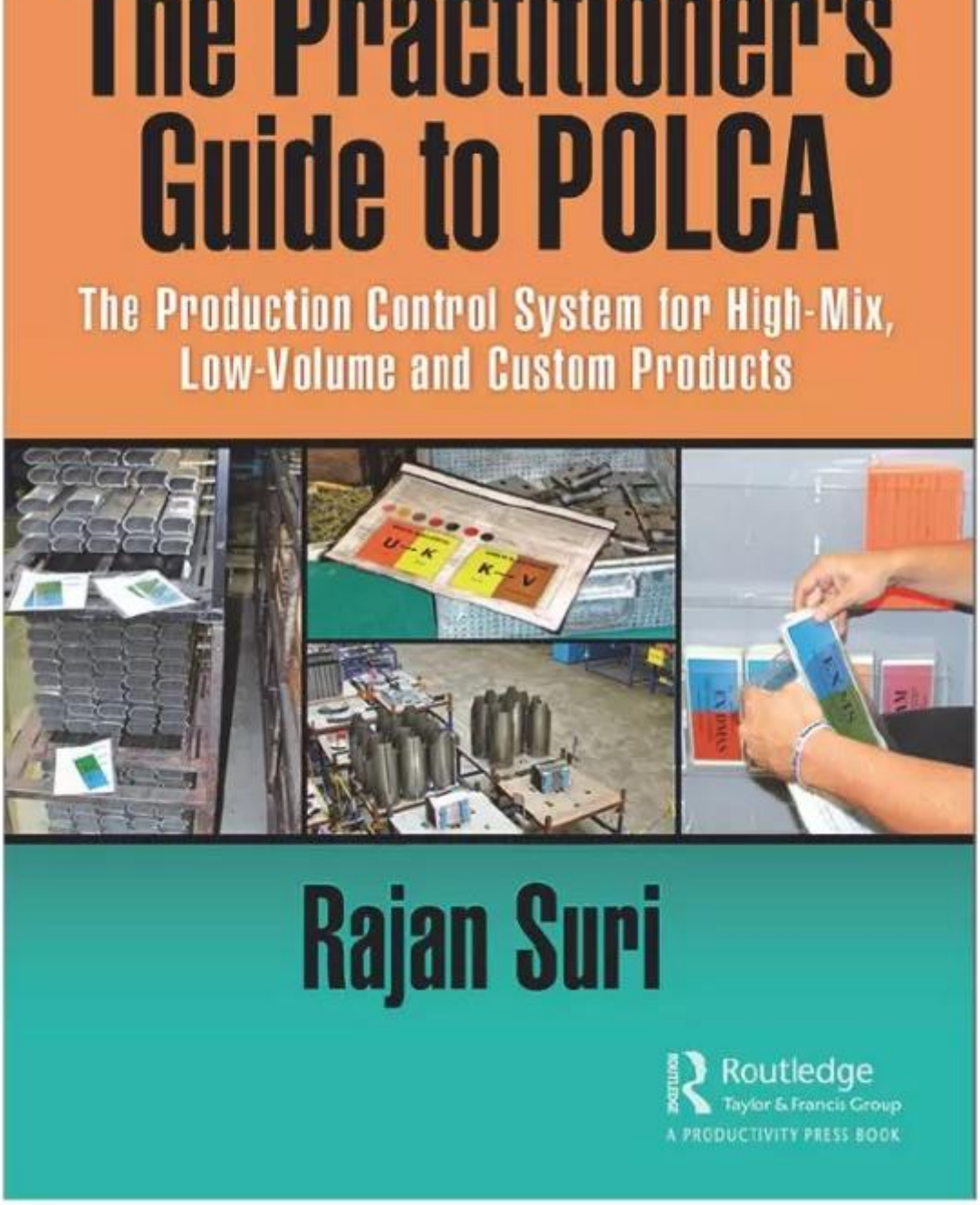
How production control system POLCA strengthens your production

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Pascal Pollet

POLCA is a people-friendly card-based visual production control system that manages the flow of jobs through the shop floor. The production control method is particularly suited for high-mix-low-volume and custom-engineered products.



POLCA - 'Paired-cell Overlapping Loops of Cards with Authorization' - is a card-based visual control system that manages the flow of jobs through the shop floor: at each operation, it controls which job should be worked on next to meet delivery targets. POLCA ensures that upstream operations use their capacity effectively by working on jobs that are needed downstream, while at the same time preventing excessive work-in-process (WIP) build-ups when bottlenecks appear unexpectedly.

As a result, jobs keep flowing through the factory and managers, supervisors and planners see solutions to problems rather than getting lost in the complexity.

POLCA is particularly suited to companies manufacturing high-mix-low-volume and custom products, for which kanban systems do not work well. These companies often struggle with long lead times, late deliveries, and daily expediting. POLCA has delivered impressive results in such companies, including 50-75% reduction in inventory and lead times, and on-time delivery improved to over 98%.

How can POLCA strengthen your production?

POLCA builds on the capabilities of humans in the system
Many software-based scheduling systems lose sight of the fact that people need to buy in to the system and support it. This has resulted in ineffective or failed implementations. In contrast, experience with many companies has shown that people on the front line like using POLCA, and they help to ensure that it works well.

POLCA builds on cells, teams and ownership
Many companies are implementing cells and creating shop floor teams that have ownership of their areas. POLCA not only builds on this structure but also takes advantage of it to get improved performance from these teams. In addition, it supports better coordination and cooperation between different shop floor teams.

POLCA eliminates the daily stress of hot jobs
Employees learn that the visual signals from POLCA enable them to react quickly to shop floor realities such as bottlenecks, part shortages, and customer expedites without getting lost in the complexity. As problems are eliminated, management and supervisors' time is liberated to focus on strategic improvements instead of daily fire-fighting.

The crowning aspect of POLCA is that it is simple
Utilizing POLCA does not require any complex software implementation: it can be used without an ERP system or it can seamlessly complement an existing ERP system.

Online masterclass

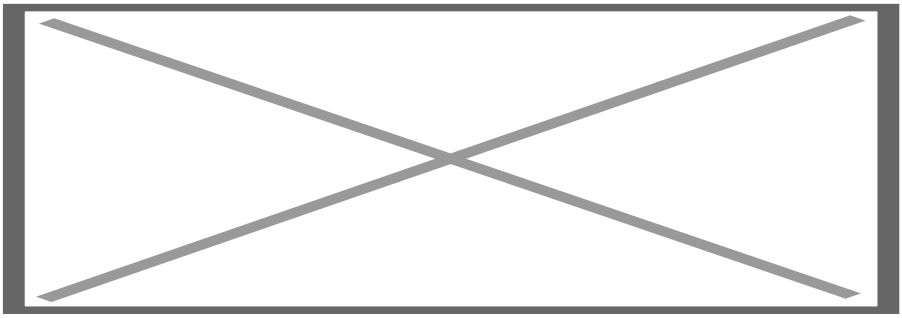
On **14 October** Sirris will organise in cooperation with the QRM Institute an online masterclass on POLCA, with the inventor of QRM and POLCA, Rajan Suri.

The content of this masterclass:

- The need for a new control strategy: see why ERP/MRP systems and Kanban do not work well in low-volume or custom environments.
- Understanding POLCA: learn the simple rules that drive this visual card-based system, and the operational benefits that result.
- Computer simulation: experience how POLCA works in an example company through this visualization.

- Overview of new book on POLCA: get a “walk-through” of Suri’s new book with tips on how to use it to support your POLCA system design and implementation.

- Industry case studies: see practical examples showing the effectiveness of POLCA for companies in many industries in USA, Canada, and Europe.



Authors



Pascal Pollet