

CASE STUDY

Creating an organization-wide culture of quality

Digitization of quality control inspections with Fulcrum makes quality a team effort

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This customer success story outlines how **Halton Company**, part of a family-owned, global technology organization delivering complex indoor air solutions, digitized its quality control inspections program with Fulcrum to ensure consistently superior products for end customers.

The Challenges

- Quality control data is not easily accessible from paper inspection records
- Paper checklists promote cursory examinations, often resulting in incomplete quality control audit documentation
- Inability to share quality control inspection data to promote constant improvement
- Ineffective and delayed identification of quality issues

Key Outcomes

- A single source of truth for easily referenced digital files (including photos) documenting quality of every product
- Digital inspection apps promoting interactive quality control engagement and accountability
- Streamlined product quality issue resolution using auto notifications directly to involved departments
- Insight on training requirements and repetitive quality issues using consolidated quality data across inspections
- A quality-first culture empowering the assembly line to report issues on mobile devices for early intervention and design review



Creating a superior product through quality control digitization

Halton Company's corporate vision and strategy focuses on a premium customer experience, innovative digital capabilities, and high employee commitment. Delivering a quality product is at the heart of its business.

Aaron Vanover is Halton Company's Manager of Quality Assurance and Quality Control. *"In 2019 we were tasked with digitizing our quality checklist process on the floor," Vanover says. "At that point, we were using paper quality control forms that were filled out as products traveled through the manufacturing process. These were then manually scanned and filed away into a directory on a server. The data was not in an easily usable format so was not really supporting any other quality initiatives".*

In 2021, after a brief pause due to COVID, Halton Company completed its evaluation and chose Fulcrum. *"Fulcrum was very feature-rich at a competitive price point," Vanover recalls. "While our intent was to initially digitize the quality control checklist process, we recognized that Fulcrum was not just a one-trick pony and that it would allow us to branch out to solve problems and support quality initiatives beyond our original scope."*

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Aaron Vanover
Manager of QA & QC
Halton Company

Guaranteed quality control inspection accuracy, built-in accountability

Using Fulcrum's inspection app builder, Halton Company collapsed its paper forms for a three-phase quality control inspection process into a single all-encompassing digital checklist app for each product. Fulcrum's platform filtering logic guides inspectors through the quality control procedure based on their inputs at each inspection point. *"We utilize logic to hide and show additional fields throughout the inspection process based on prior answers and options selected,"* Vanover says. *"This helps tailor each inspection to the actual product being looked at and guides inspectors accurately through this process. Additionally, we leverage the status field to advance the inspectors through quality control gates, or the different stages of their inspections. This provides definitive checkpoints in our process that must be cleared before something can advance in the production process. The status field also allows us to limit what an inspector is seeing to what's relevant to them – for example, our welding inspector doesn't need to see questions about wiring and piping."*

"Using Fulcrum, Halton Company's quality control team provides richer, better documented support, enabling them to catch more issues. For example, we had a product that shipped out with a missing component. So we added a required photo field to the quality control checklist to ensure that each component was installed, ensuring that the mistake would not recur," Vanover says. *"Capabilities like this greatly increase our confidence that we are providing our customers with a quality product and great experience."*

Halton designs and manufactures commercial kitchen air ventilation solutions.

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Centralized quality control inspection data accessibility supports quality improvement initiatives

Automatically digitizing inspection data and processes means Halton Company now has access to a centralized single source of truth across all product inspections, providing insight on both training requirements and repetitive quality issues requiring engineering review and/or modification. Vanover says, *“On a paper checklist, the tendency is to just quickly check off the boxes, or draw a line right through a list of them. With Fulcrum, the team is more interactive with their inspections, which helps us react very swiftly if we experience an issue.”*

“For issues that arise and are trending, the quality team investigates and attributes it to a source department or procedure,” says Vanover. *“The data they can now access on the platform, including photos taken during the inspections, provide insight down to an individual operator who may need training, a procedure that might need modification to prevent downstream issues, or a repetitive occurrence that requires design and engineering input.”*

Promoting a “Culture of Quality” with the right tools

Recently Fulcrum opened up the ability for employees and other stakeholders to report quality issues even if they do not have a Fulcrum user license. By scanning a QR code, an online form can be accessed and completed right on their mobile device, including adding pictures. Upon submission, the reported issue is visible and actionable right on the Fulcrum platform. Seeing the potential value in identifying quality concerns further upstream in the manufacturing process, Halton Company was quick to promote this capability to its assembly teams.

“[Fulcrum] lets employees on the floor who actually are building the product take ownership. Everyone’s got a smartphone. So now they see an issue and report it so it can be fixed, instead of just ignoring it because that’s the way it’s always been done.”

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"It allowed us to go from maybe 4 to 7 employees who can interact digitally and in real-time with the quality team, to the entire production department," says Vanover. "It lets employees on the floor who actually are building the product take ownership. Everyone's got a smartphone. So now they see an issue and report it so it can be fixed, instead of just ignoring it because that's the way it's always been done."

Prior to rolling out Fulcrum's QR code access reporting, Vanover would get one or two product issues or improvement recommendations submitted manually per month. Communication and visibility across teams into the status of these was limited and resolution would often take years – or not happen at all.

Vanover says, *"Within the first week of rolling this out, I had four reports come in on the platform. Two of them were immediately actionable and a third is undergoing more investigation. Now that issues reported by our workers on the floor are immediately visible on the platform to those who can implement changes, we are seeing system-wide improvements being made in 30 to 60 days versus six months or longer."*

And clearly there is a positive impact on morale. With more consistent and visible actions taken based on their input, Vanover sees an increase in worker engagement and ownership of the process of manufacturing a quality product.



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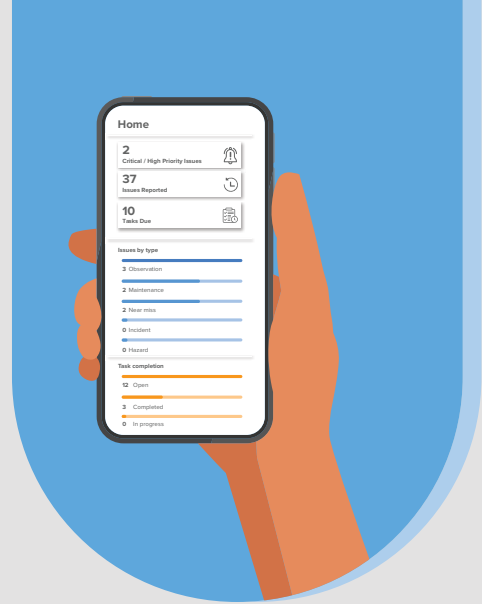


CONCLUSION

Halton Company embarked on its search for a solution to digitize its quality control inspection programs in 2019 in order to improve efficiencies, streamline inspection processes, propel upstream quality assurance programs, and promote a “quality in design” culture.

The switch to digital using Fulcrum’s platform has since provided accessible, accurate quality control data, broadened quality issue reporting to include the entire production team, and empowered the quality teams with visible quality trends to drive training and constant improvement initiatives.

“The advantages of moving quality control programs from pen and paper are clearly many,” says Vanover. “Quality managers looking to switch over need to ensure they choose a platform that provides both simplicity and flexibility that grows with them to instill a culture of quality across their organizations.”



If you’re a manufacturing organization struggling with pen-and-paper inspections for safety or quality, we can help. Sign up for a [free trial](#) and get started on your own digital transformation!