

GLOBAL SHOP SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY

Corilam Fabricating Co., Inc.

The North Carolina Piedmont region has a long history of woodworking craftsmanship. It is here, in the town of Kernersville, where you'll find *Corilam Fabricating Co., Inc.* A manufacturer of wood furniture products for education and healthcare facilities, Corilam continues the rich tradition of fine woodworking, while coping with their special challenges: heavy demand during the summer months for the school furniture line coupled with a large temporary workforce.



Brad Robins, President at Corilam, stands next a cabinet awaiting completion.



A Corilam operator checks spec before sending a furniture part through a finishing machine.

Corilam - Always in Season

"We met Global Shop Solutions in 2000," recalls Corilam President Brad Robins. "At the time, we were in the early stages of searching for an ERP software provider. We had been thinking for some time that we needed something to pull everything together in our operation. We had a lot of different systems in place that were handling a lot of different tasks in our shop. It was all very inefficient. What we decided we needed was an integrated, single-point system."

With the growing necessity for an **all-inclusive ERP system**, Corilam looked at a variety of software options until they had a demo with Global Shop Solutions. According to Robins, it was quickly apparent during the demo that Global Shop Solutions ERP software was exactly what they were looking for.

"The demo of the software specifically addressed the business organizational challenges we were having, and how we could use the system to overcome them," continues Robins. "Since the day we implemented, it's given us the ability to see everything that's going on in the company."

Maximum Shop Floor Control

In manufacturing there are two perspectives from which to view the market landscape – the long view of **sales orders** and **supply chains**, and the nearer view with **job costing** and **production management**. For operations such as Corilam, dealing with both seasonal influxes and just-in-time material management, the melding of long and short views are needed in order to facilitate the day-to-day functions of lean cell production techniques.

Corilam uses the **Shop Floor Data Collection** stations on their shop floor for the efficient management of both direct and indirect costs. In fact, Corilam takes advantage of every aspect of the ERP software functionality to keep maximum control of their shop floor. It's a notion appreciated by Robins and the rest of the Corilam management every day.

“We utilize single routers, we utilize BOMs, multiple work orders, and we do schedules,” says Robins. “I think we use just about every aspect of shop floor control that can be imagined through Global Shop Solutions. Also, as a furniture manufacturer and a custom shop, we’re always going to have to deal with getting materials in on time. For this, Global Shop Solutions puts everything in perspective for us so we can see, in advance, how to handle what’s coming and to make sure we’re ready for it.”

Even Seasonal Workers Use ERP

Being “ready” is important for a shop whose order flow is seasonal, and whose labor base may come to the company unfamiliar with ERP software. In short, ERP software for seasonal shops like Corilam must not only be robust at the higher analytic ends, but must also be easy to learn and use at the basic operator level. Ease of use has been the hallmark of Global Shop Solutions ERP software for decades, and Corilam sees great advantage in being able to teach their seasonal workforce quickly and efficiently.

“We’re mostly a seasonal manufacturing operation, and we use a great deal of temporary help in the summer months,” observes Robins, “so we have a lot of people coming into our environment who are there for just a few days, or weeks, or months. And still, we put everybody through Global Shop Solutions ERP software – everyone clocks in and out, and they’re required to be on jobs, albeit direct or indirect. Training on Global Shop Solutions ERP software is not something we have a problem with. A lot of the time they’re assigned a temporary employee status number and they clock right into the system. So the software works really well with our timeclock methods.”

Peak Efficiency at All Times

On the other hand, when it comes to custom furniture manufacturing throughout the year, Corilam is able to achieve the sort of efficiencies that contribute to increasing profitability for their products. Along with orders placed from their product catalog, Corilam produces custom parts and assemblies through a variety of job types. The rapid flexibility of functionality is, perhaps, the greatest attribute Global Shop Solutions ERP software brings to the Corilam operation.

“Global Shop Solutions gives us a really good idea of where we need to work more, to make things more efficient,” says Robins. “The hardest thing for the custom side of our business is that the products do change quite a bit, and sometimes it’s hard for us to objectively judge our efficiency levels because of all of these changes. So, what Global Shop Solutions helps us do is to pinpoint certain areas where we can, for example, make a particular work cell run more efficiently.”

In terms of cost accounting, Global Shop Solutions ERP software gives Corilam a framework to review everything and to better understand their cost structure. Purchasing to both inventory and to the job, and with the variety of product types they deal with everyday – individual components, sub-assemblies, full-assemblies, and the products they market from their catalog – they use Global Shop Solutions ERP software to easily track all of their orders through a single system.

Corilam uses their ERP software in alliance with 3D design and CAD programs to design products meeting the specific manufacturing and application requirements of a wide variety of customers. In addition, they’re capable of producing short run and one-off projects, all the while working with shorter lead times and rapid turnarounds. This requires a strong scheduling and purchasing system that can reliably gather and assess shop-wide, real time data. For Corilam, quality data and efficient operation are not options, but a way of life.



Employees on Corilam’s shop floor.

Robins points out that when it comes to efficiency, Global Shop Solutions ERP software offers a system rich in capabilities.

“We use auto purchasing, inventory management, and auto work order generation to take control of our work flow,” states Robins. With the custom order nature of our business, we have to order the material based on the orders. So, without a doubt, the software helps us identify what we need quicker as order details are completed and submitted. When we combine that with better scheduling, it’s easy for us to see that the biggest improvement we’ve had since implementing is our ability to recognize and get materials ordered quickly, and that capability has, in turn, greatly improved our on-time delivery.”

Building the Better Product

Corilam depends on Global Shop Solutions ERP software for the foundation of their production control – both on the shop floor and in the front office. [Daily balancing](#) enhances cost effectiveness, and the complete Global Shop Solutions ERP software package is used for front office management. Order entry, [payroll](#), and other administrative tasks are handled more efficiently using Global Shop Solutions ERP software.

According to Robins, Corilam uses “every aspect of Global Shop Solutions for the front office, with the result that our staff size has held constant while we’ve grown over the years in using the software. We’re able to do more business with the same amount of staff, and that’s been a big help and bottom line improvement for us.”

Ultimately, the relationship between Corilam and Global Shop Solutions harkens back to the tried and true methods of doing business. That is, if you provide good products, good service, and good value, everyone comes out ahead in the end. It’s a fundamental philosophy shared by the two companies.

“Corilam’s a family-owned business, and so is Global Shop Solutions. That’s been one of our attractions to their operation from the very beginning,” observes Robins. “We understand that there’s a lot more pride when you have a family-owned business, and obviously it’s a closer feeling and relationship we have with Global Shop Solutions. I know that they’re going to be reliable, and everybody in their organization is a little closer tied to us, because they’re also a family-run business. We like that.”