

## GLOBAL SHOP SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY

# Design Display Group

Founded in 1986, *Design Display Group (DDG)* is a custom manufacturer of point-of-purchase *displays, fixtures and signage*, including retail store interactive and freestanding displays, as well as motion light and sound displays. Specializing in high-end displays for cosmetic products, DDG also serves the health and beauty, toys, electronics, apparel and home improvement industries with award-winning displays that helps their customers increase brand awareness and sales.



*DDG's dedicated team on the manufacturing shop floor ensuring data accuracy.*



*DDG shop floor.*

Headquartered in Carlstadt, New Jersey, DDG operates out of a 100,000-square-foot production facility, using the latest in UV screening, laser cutting, and CNC routing systems to produce their displays. The company works with all types of display materials, including injection-molded, fabricated, vacuum-formed plastics, wood, metal, and wire, and their innovative designs have won more “Design of the Times” awards, given by the Path to Purchase Institute, than any other company. With their exceptionally high quality standards, DDG has also earned Quality Control Vendor Certification from many of their corporate clients.

DDG implemented Global Shop Solutions ERP software in the early stages of the company’s development, but did not fully implement the ERP system for several years. As the company continued to grow, the need for better visibility of data and more control over shop floor processes increased at a rapid pace, prompting DDG to launch an initiative to expand its use of the software into all areas of the business.

“Early on, our culture and priorities didn’t focus on using technology systems,” says DDG Chief Financial Officer John Bollbach. “We had the systems in place; we just weren’t using them. As a result, a lot of critical knowledge about our products, processes and customers resided in the heads of a few people. That worked until we reached a certain size, at which point we needed improved organization and access to data to make better business decisions.”

### **Cutting Way Back on Paper**

DDG started by re-training employees to help them understand and use the ERP system more effectively. This included sending people to *ERP Boot Camp* – a week-long training session in The Woodlands, Texas – and bringing in Global Shop Solutions *Consultants* to work with employees on specific issues.

To ease the transition, management planned a number of quick “wins” to get employees on board with using the system. The first of these involved a dramatic reduction in paper.

“We used to do everything with paper, often with up to a hundred pieces for a single job or change order,” says Bollbach. “Then we started using the [Paperless software](#) to put the data in PDF format and email it to employees. Now they can get all the job data they need electronically instead of hunting through reams of paper.”

Instead of having employees spend hours manually writing and rewriting to document their production, DDG started using the auto reporting features to tell them how much they produced and shipped at the end of each day. Once people realized how much time this saved everyone, attitudes about the value of using the system quickly changed.

***“Global Shop Solutions allows me to be much more proactive because the data is up to the moment and it’s right there when I need it.”***

#### **Leaning Production with Work Orders and BOMs**

From there, the company set to work on three areas targeted for improvement: [communication of order specs and requirements](#), [planning visibility](#), and job tracking. Creating work orders and bills of materials (BOMs) in Global Shop Solutions ERP software has generated significant improvement in each of these areas.

Implementing work orders helps bridge the gap from the front end of the business to the back end by dictating the materials, labor and drawing packages required for each job. Planners now print out the work order and the BOM, and the project manager has to sign off on them before the job gets released to the floor. These documents follow the job through the floor so that people know where a job is at all times, who’s working on it, and what steps remain before completion.

“The work orders also make it easier to track labor at each workcenter,” says Bollbach. “And using the [Shop Floor Data Collection stations](#) to collect the work order integration data on a daily basis gives us the power to extract labor and material costs for everything we produce. It also makes it faster and easier to conduct our end-of-job recaps.”

“We haven’t reached the point yet where we can do it all electronically,” continues Bollbach. “We plan to keep eliminating more paper and saving more time as we get better at using the system. In the meantime, the visibility of data has made a huge impact on our ability to move jobs through the shop floor in a timelier manner.”

#### **20% Reduction in Materials Spending**

Next, DDG set about bringing inventory management into the 21st century – a critical process considering the company manages about 15,000 distinct part numbers. Using the [Inventory application](#) in the warehouse, DDG has gone from having no real inventory processes (including zero physical inventory counts) to having a sophisticated inventory system that enables management to quickly and accurately access the number, amount and value of all inventory assets.

“We now barcode every raw material and finish goods part that goes into the warehouse” says Bollbach. “This allows us to scan, count, print and verify the exact location of all inventory. We can also do physical counts in a reasonable amount of time. We’re not 100% accurate yet because we don’t have the inventory module installed in the production building. However, it’s like night and day between now and our old way of doing things.”

“We’re also doing a better job of managing our kanban inventory,” continues Bollbach. “We actually know where to find materials, which speeds up job production. And the visibility of inventory data has reduced material purchasing costs by 20%. Before, we always over-ordered. Now we can see what we have on hand and order only as needed.”

## Simplifying Their Manufacturing

As DDG continues to use more of the ERP software, they continue to find new ways to simplify and improve their manufacturing and business processes.

- **Faster order processing.** From entering the [sales order](#) to shipping the order out the door, Global Shop Solutions ERP software makes every step of the process faster and more efficient by serving as the global hub for quick access and processing of data.
- **Customizable reports.** The ability to format data according to individual preferences makes it easier to review and analyze key business data. It also saves time. It used to take one person an entire week to create the production planning report for the weekly meeting. Now the reports print out in minutes, pulling real-time data from many different ERP software applications.
- **Managing customer constraints.** Customers often lag behind schedule when supplying DDG with graphics and artwork for their products. With the visibility of data in the ERP software, DDG can manage these jobs more effectively when materials arrive late.
- **Improving customer service.** Has the job been quoted? Has the work order been completed and released to the floor? Has the job been shipped and invoiced? DDG can now track the progress of any order and provide answers for the sales team and customers with just a few clicks of the mouse.

According to Bollbach, the visibility of data in Global Shop Solutions ERP software has been a real game changer for his position as CFO and for the company as a whole.

“I used to spend 30 days putting together a financial analysis, by which time much of it had changed,” he says. “Global Shop Solutions allows me to be much more proactive because the data is up to the moment and it’s right there when I need it. I can now solve problems more effectively and make better business decisions.”

“Global Shop Solutions provides a complete yet flexible ERP system. You can use some or all of the modules based on your needs, and you can create ad hoc reports and other changes to fit the software to your business. DDG has experienced a lot of growth recently, and the system helps us do a much better job of planning our workload. Without it, we probably wouldn’t be where we are now.”



*Two facilities of operation, production and warehouse - 100,000 combined square feet.*