

# Metrix Cuts Estimating, Planning and Prepress Time by "Over Half" at Multi-Craft

For more than five decades, Multi-Craft has served the greater Cincinnati Ohio business community with premier graphic communications services. The privately-held, family-owned business has a "customer first" commitment, and wins awards and accolades to demonstrate its success.

Tom Gibbs, VP of Manufacturing, helps to ensure that the company maintains its leadership by driving smart investments in automation and forward-thinking technologies that speed production, improve accuracy, and increase overall customer and employee satisfaction. Production Manager Doug Weber is instrumental in implementing the new technologies, assisted by Prepress Manager Kevin Coombs. With this winning team at its manufacturing heart, Multi-Craft is poised to continue its steady growth.

## **Challenge**

In the highly competitive graphic communications industry, Multi-Craft sets itself apart by offering a full-spectrum of services: marketing communications, strategic design, and print – both offset and digital – as well as packaging, finishing and fulfillment.

Providing this range of services demands a highly efficient end-to-end workflow. VP of Manufacturing Tom Gibbs knew that using a manual planning process and desktop imposition software to "redraw" the plans was holding the company back from automation and productivity gains. So, when the company decided to upgrade its Rampage prepress software, they selected Metrix as the perfect complement.



## **Challenge:**

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"Our manual planning methods and imposition software were inefficient and error prone," explains Kevin Coombs, Prepress Manager. "We knew that Metrix would automate those steps. What we didn't realize is that using Metrix would help make everything else in the workflow faster, more accurate, and more predictable."

### **Solution**

After an excellent one-day introductory session on Metrix, followed by two days of on-the-job training, Kevin Coombs recalls that Metrix was being used for live production by the end of the first week, and by the end of the second week all production had been moved to Metrix. "We still have our old imposition software, but it's on a machine that we don't have plugged in," says Kevin.

"Everyone," explains Kevin, "estimators, CSRs, planners, and prepress and production teams – of varying experience levels and software savvy, have been impressed with how easy Metrix is to use, and how it makes short work of both simple and complex projects. Our Production Manager, Doug Weber, spearheaded the effort to bring all the different departments on board with Metrix – and everyone has been finding their work easier and more rewarding ever since."

Coombs notes that the prepress operators are thrilled at being relieved of the imposition burden, so that they can focus on their mandate – prepress. For example, a local printer sent in a complex job they were unable to accommodate. It involved 60 versions of a product on 20 press forms. "With our old software, creating the layouts would have required three to four hours," says Coombs. "But with Metrix, we decided to try importing a CSV file, which we'd never done before. We read the how-to, made the Excel file, and bam! The job was planned in 10 minutes. Not only that – it was on its way to the press room within 30 minutes! Instead of taking forever, it was instant."

### **Results:**

"Metrix is an awesome product. With Metrix, we complete estimating, planning and prepress in less than half the time. The efficiency and cost savings are tremendous."

KEVIN COOMBS, PREPRESS MANAGER  
MULTI-CRAFT



## Results

Kevin Coombs recalls a project where estimators compared plans that were generated with and without Metrix. The Metrix-generated plan saved \$11,000. "That may not sound like a lot to a larger printer, but for us, this type of savings can mean the difference between bidding for, or winning, a job."

Once the job has been won by the Metrix operators in the estimating department, Multi-Craft planners are tasked with using Metrix to "beat the estimate" if they can. Sometimes this means more significant savings, though the Metrix estimators have usually found the most efficient job plan and so are pretty hard to beat.

In addition to the automation and efficiency gains from Metrix, Multi-Craft applauds Metrix Software as a company that provides excellent customer service, and continues to improve and advance its product. Coombs recalls one technical support issue that arose late on a Friday afternoon. By 6:00AM on the following Monday, he received a fix for the problem. "The Metrix Software support team was fantastic – they saved the day."

"Metrix and Metrix Software live up to the expectations they set, unlike many products and companies," concludes Kevin Coombs. In this sense, Multi-Craft and Metrix Software are like-minded companies. Both share a long-term goal of being industry leaders and innovators, and continually delighting their customers.

## Results:

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