

Consumer Products JDA Scheduling Transformation

The Challenge:

Highly seasonal product demand stressed the manufacturing capacity of the world's top producer of office products to the brink, creating the need to ensure that strained capacity is used optimally. In the summer months, hundreds of retail back-to-school promotions can overload manufacturing facilities and as promotions are finalized and forecasts and product mix change rapidly, rebalancing demand and supply quickly and optimally is critical.

In many environments, inventory can be pre-built for seasonal spikes however with constraints on warehouse space for both raw materials and finished goods, using inventory as a shock absorber between demand and factory activity is not an option. Needing to better manage production schedules in this volatile and constrained environment, the client sought out an automated solution to replace their manual scheduling processes.

The Solution:

After surveying available options, the customer chose JDA's Sequencing finite scheduling solution and sought an implementation partner with the domain expertise to fully integrate the Sequencing tool with their existing JDA Demand and Master Planning footprint. Spinnaker was engaged because our team brought the mix of experience and skills needed to not only implement Sequencing technically, but to establish the strong business processes and change management oversight needed to adopt the solution.

The project goal was to create a fully integrated solution that would repeatedly re-optimize production schedules as demand changed, continuing to maximize product output and asset utilization while respecting business priorities and capacity constraints.

Employing an Agile implementation methodology, the team created an initial scheduling model and iterated the solution to refine the manufacturing constraints and scheduling logic to reflect business priorities. With each learning cycle, the team improved the schedule quality and steadily migrated toward automated and responsive scheduling decisions while providing schedulers the ability to manage priorities and business rules. The resulting solution

consistently creates schedules that provide the desired level of service, respect both material and resource constraints in a highly complex manufacturing environment, and minimize lost time to changeovers.

The Results:

The client is seeing major benefits from the Sequencing implementation. The sequencing model used by JDA handles all the essential variables including changeover time, need date, and machine idle time. Sequencing generates a near optimal schedule in seconds, while previously this was revised manually in a suboptimal manner several times a day, with consequent exposure to human error, bias, and inconsistency.


Today, important KPIs are improving. Due to improved change-over sequences, 20 hours of available production capacity was gained as changeover time reduced by 40%. Customer service has improved as more orders are being delivered on time since the Sequencing launch.

In addition to modeling the necessary business constraints and improving KPIs, Sequencing provides an interactive and user-friendly tool that has helped standardize business processes, reduce scheduling time, and align planning and shop floor activities. Standard reporting provides valuable reporting capabilities that have enhanced our client's ability to track to strategic goals.

Spinnaker worked hand-in-hand with the client to maximize user adoption of the new systems. Ultimately, the new solution produced production plans that the business could trust and that transformed the scheduling process. Our client is currently planning to take our efficiencies to the next level by rolling out the Sequencing-based process globally.

About Spinnaker: Spinnaker is a supply chain services company that helps clients grow, manage risk, reduce costs, and improve customer service by developing world-class supply chain capabilities. Our services help clients develop the right supply chain strategy for their business challenges and implement the process and technology solutions to improve Demand/Supply Planning, Procurement and Sourcing, Logistics and Warehousing, and Reverse Logistics business performance. Spinnaker offers a unique service delivery model that combines the strength of deeply experienced management and technology consultants with a seasoned team of business process outsourcing (BPO) and 3rd-party logistics (3PL) professionals. Founded in 2002, Spinnaker has offices in Boston, Columbus, Denver, Houston, Memphis, Pittsburgh, London, and Singapore.

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