

## Furniture Manufacturer Planning and Scheduling Software Selection

Faced with an aging legacy supply chain planning system for order promising, master production scheduling, and detailed line sequencing a leading industrial manufacturer sought to select and implement a replacement system. Having used the highly customized previous system for many years, the company sought Spinnaker's guidance during the software selection process to help understand the software market and make sure that key business requirements could be satisfied.

### The Challenge:

Over many years, the client had highly customized their current system to support a very tight integration of order promising, production planning, and shop floor sequencing. With a strong focus on continuous improvement, the current system's capabilities were also very tightly coupled with a responsive manufacturing environment where products are manufactured with short lead-times and factories and suppliers rely on frequent updates to near term production schedules to plan the workforce and schedule raw material deliveries.

The current system had been tuned for this responsive environment, however the technology infrastructure used was over 20 years old and needed to be replaced from an IT risk management perspective. The client was also engaged in a major ERP initiative and needed to time the implementation of the new system to be well coordinated with the deployment of this system.

Additionally, as the client's business evolved a new set of business demands appeared on the horizon and in combination with the IT motivators for the initiative the business also saw this as an opportune time to evaluate their necessary capabilities and identify opportunities to improve. With a high baseline for performance, the new software solution had to satisfy both a demanding business community and be reasonable from a cost and IT management perspective – not an easy task.

### The Approach:

The client had already begun a software selection process when the decision was made to engage Spinnaker to provide additional outside expertise. Given the critical nature of the decision, executive management

believed that adding additional expertise to the strong internal team would make the process both faster and more efficient. In addition to engaging Spinnaker, the client regularly sought outside perspectives from industry analysts including Gartner.

Spinnaker's role on the project involved helping the client prepare for and execute the software selection by facilitating sessions to architect the future state business process and systems architecture, helping prepare the software selection RFP, and providing guidance regarding the approach for evaluating and scoring the RFP and vendor software demo results.

## The Results:

The client was focused on an aggressive timeline to finalize the software selection but also knew that it was extremely critical to make the right choice. With a dedicated internal team and expert support from Spinnaker, the team was able to execute in the required timeline while ensuring that internal teams had fully evaluated a set of strong candidates to finalize a selection that all parties believed to be the right choice.


A key enabler of this success was the ability to quickly define a short-list of strong vendors for the final RFP and software demo process. Spinnaker's guidance and education helped the client understand the capabilities of the different vendors and which would be suitable for their relatively unique and specific business needs. Additionally, Spinnaker helped the client prepare the RFP in such a way that software vendors would understand the unique needs and then subsequently helped the client navigate a set of vendor proposals that all offered different methodologies for how to solve the problem.

Recognizing that no one solution would satisfy all business needs perfectly, Spinnaker and the client worked to prioritize needs and the related business benefit delivered to choose the vendor that added the most overall business value and architect a future state that will significantly improve key order promising and production planning capabilities.

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