

## GLOBAL SHOP SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY

# CAP & Associates, Inc.

Established in 1981 by Charlene Prosnik, *CAP & Associates, Inc.* is a family-owned business that designs and manufactures store displays and custom fixtures for a wide variety of regional and national retailers.



*The CAP & Associates headquarters in Columbus, Ohio.*



*The energy efficient warehouse located across the street from the main facility; complete with motion lighting to save energy.*

Headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, CAP can produce everything from a single prototype to a complete store package or large-volume fixture rollout. The company's in-house **metal fabrication** capabilities range from small accessories to entire metal displays, and its numerous finishing options include chrome plating and powder coating.

An environmentally aware company, CAP utilizes the latest in dust collection, nested CNC machines, electric lift trucks, CARB compliant materials, and loading software to reduce air pollution, minimize waste, and maximize loading procedures to improve fuel economy. And like its trusted business partner **Global Shop Solutions**, CAP also prides itself on more than 30 years of stable ownership in an industry where ownership frequently changes hands.

### **Tighter Inventory Controls, Less Overtime**

Prior to Global Shop Solutions ERP software, CAP struggled with a variety of production management issues, especially with their large, **make-to-stock orders**.

Production data lacked coordination and integration. Raw materials were ordered from manual spreadsheets rather than BOMs. There was no system in place to create demand for volume production runs and drive the acquisition of raw materials. As a result, raw materials inventory ran high, and CAP frequently had to ship from work in progress when make-to-stock inventory ran low.

With Global Shop Solutions ERP software in place, CAP now has firm control over raw materials acquisition, buying to the job rather than buying in advance and hoping they have enough on hand for each job. They consistently produce large-volume runs on schedule, and ship from stock rather than work in progress. And the ability to accurately predict labor and machine capacity has led to a dramatic reduction in overtime expenses.

"Global Shop Solutions gives us the visibility we need to manage the entire production process more efficiently and effectively," says Annette McLaughlin, Production Control and IT Manager for CAP. "We now know when to order raw materials, how much, and when to begin production to meet customer delivery dates. Also, the estimating module allows us to accurately project how much labor it will take to turn a project and whether we will need to run overtime.

“With Global Shop Solutions, we’ve gotten so efficient at projecting capacity and scheduling workflow that we’ve run very little overtime this year,” says McLaughlin. “Instead of working a small group of people a ton of overtime hours, we’ve added a second shift of 35 people to run the production line, which is much more efficient and cost-effective.”

## Going Mobile With ERP Software

In an industry where it’s critical to stay on the leading edge of technology, CAP has embraced the future by implementing many of Global Shop Solutions’ mobile technologies, including mobile labor collection.

Instead of investing in multiple **Shop Floor Data Collection** stations, CAP uses **GS Mobile** Standard Labor for clocking in and out of work orders. Extended Work In Process, also on GS Mobile, gives a snapshot of all work in progress, including who is working on what and for how long. This helps supervisors identify jobs taking longer than they should, allowing them to assist employees, where needed, to keep the job within estimated time.

“For the first time, we have real-time labor collection,” says McLaughlin. “At any point in the production process, we can compare the data with estimates to see if we’re hitting our numbers or if we need to look at restructuring our pricing.”

In addition, CAP uses **Document Control™** to save time when printing forms used on the shop floor. Instead of having to go to the front office and get someone else to print them, workers simply open Document Control and print work order and employee-related forms right on the shop floor.

Workers also use GS Mobile to issue material to work orders, receive purchase orders, conduct bin transfers, and more. To issue materials to work orders, they simply scan the work order router and the materials being picked, print a label that identifies the department and the job, and the data automatically gets updated in the system.

Now that CAP has added barcodes to all finished products, Global Shop Solutions ERP software facilitates mobile shipping. The mobile user scans the pick list and the finished goods, which validates that the correct items are being shipped. They complete the shipment directly from the handheld device, and the paperwork automatically prints to the user’s designated laser printer.

“We have a large warehouse,” notes McLaughlin, “and it takes time to walk back to a desktop computer every time we issue material. With mobile, we can do it anywhere, at any time, in a few seconds.”

## Tracking Quality

Customer and shop floor manufacturing changes are easily tracked through the **Quality Control** application – a huge improvement over the previous manual process.

Now, sales staff or shop floor personnel submit an ECR form to request design, process improvement or material changes. These forms accompany drawings and cut bills that denote all changes. Workers then scan the documents into Document Control for future reference, and an ECN number is assigned. Once engineers have made the requested changes and signed off on their step, the production control team makes necessary changes to the routers, approves the ECN, and the changes go into effect on the shop floor.

“QC is faster, easier, and more accurate with Global Shop Solutions,” notes McLaughlin. “We also use a **custom Crystal report** that tracks past history by fixture for quick look-ups in the document catalog.”

## Complete Visibility of Data

As IT and production manager, McLaughlin rates Global Shop Solutions ERP software’s ease of use and fast access to data as two of its most valuable assets.



*The Edgebender allows employees to clock in and out of jobs wirelessly through GS Mobile.*

“The most important screen in Global Shop Solutions is **Supply & Demand**,” she says. “From **BOMs** and routers to open work orders, open sales order demand, **shipment history**, **total job cost**, and more, you can find everything you need to know from that one screen. I teach all new employees how to use Supply & Demand when they first come on board.”

When wearing her “production” hat, McLaughlin spends more time in the Shop Floor control application, where she issues work orders to the shop floor. She also uses **Advanced Planning and Scheduling (APS)** for scheduling labor and analyzing labor saturation to determine whether the shop is above or below capacity. This enables CAP to make informed decisions about the practicality and profitability of potential jobs.

“In the past, when the sales team brought in a new customer or new order that might conflict with the existing production schedule, we would usually take the order and try to make it happen – often with mixed results,” recalls McLaughlin.

“APS gives us complete visibility of the shop floor in terms of our currently scheduled labor hours and the availability for more, so we can make those decisions based on hard data rather than guesswork. For example, a customer might want to take delivery on the second week of the month, but Global Shop Solutions ERP software shows that we don’t have any capacity until the third or fourth week. Based on the data, we can adjust our pricing to run overtime in order to meet the dates, or the customer can adjust their schedule to meet ours. In this industry, you don’t want to promise a delivery date that you can’t meet!”

### **Competing More Effectively**

As with most manufacturing sectors, cost control and on-time delivery are make-or-break factors in the fixture industry. According to McLaughlin, Global Shop Solutions ERP software gives CAP an advantage in both areas.

By using Global Shop Solutions ERP software to efficiently produce volume runs and ship from stock, CAP has developed a stellar reputation for on-time delivery. At the same time, receiving raw materials by schedule instead of to the job has eliminated excess inventories, reducing carrying costs and freeing up cash flow. CAP also uses Global Shop Solutions ERP software’s seamless integration with Crystal reports to simplify processes and further reduce production costs.

“We use a lot of custom reports,” says McLaughlin, “such as labor by production schedule, labor by blanket commitment, or labor by customer. We do multiple volume runs throughout the year for many of our blanket customers, and we use these custom reports at every phase to see if we’re on track with our estimated labor and materials.”

Often, it’s the little improvements that add up to big results.

For example, Global Shop Solutions ERP software’s ability to automatically backflush material out of inventory saves time and improves inventory and job costing accuracy. Automatically emailing new sales order pick lists to everyone that needs a copy saves time and ensures that everyone is working off the same information. CAP also brought payroll online into Global Shop Solutions ERP software this year, eliminating the time and expense of using an additional software program.

“Global Shop Solutions helps us compete in so many ways,” adds McLaughlin. “It’s a sophisticated software package, but very user-friendly, easy to navigate, and easy to learn. And if it doesn’t do something out of the box that you need it to do, you can usually find a way to make it work.”

“The Supply & Demand screen is awesome. It’s a one-stop shop for everything you need to know about a part, customer or a job. You can keep track of virtually everything going on in your business from one screen.”



*CAP Stockroom Supervisor scanning materials out to a work order.*