

Case Study

Vinyl Signs & Graphics

Background

Vinyl Signs has been Leading Innovation in Signage for Over 40 Years. In 1980, Vinyl Signs embarked on a groundbreaking mission in the UK signage industry by introducing the very first automated plotter for sign-making. This revolutionary machine, acquired from Spandex, began our tech-first approach to graphic design and signage creation. This philosophy has remained the cornerstone of the company's identity for the past four decades.

Vinyl Signs continued to trailblaze, becoming the first to introduce vinyl design and signs to the UK market. This bold move earned Vinyl Signs accolades for its revolutionary design approach and an unwavering commitment to providing personalised customer service.

Challenge

The company management team has identified several challenges, particularly regarding the need for a more effective utilisation of high-value assets, such as large format printers.

There is a clear scope for optimising production planning, the overall workflow, and job scheduling throughout the factory, including the potential to consider how to effectively manufacture generic printed products whilst avoiding and overcoming lag times in production.

These approaches may lead to overall improved factory efficiency and capacity without the need for additional equipment or labour resources.

Delivery Partner



Solution

The Horizons team provided Vinyl Signs with several key forms of support to help optimise their business operations:

Workflow Analysis: Conducted a thorough evaluation of existing workflows, covering every stage of the production process from initial order processing to final installation processes that identified bottlenecks and highlighted areas for improvement.

Digital Twin Simulation: Explored the benefits of using specific and recommended software to create a digital twin of factory operations, allowing the teams to undergo a detailed assessment of their processes and potential improvements.

Barcoding Implementation: Investigated how barcodes could enhance job and material tracking, particularly during the installation phase to improve efficiencies and overall accuracy in tracking materials and jobs.

Office Automation: Assessed the potential for automating office systems to streamline administrative tasks, improve operational efficiency, remove manual tasks, and lower the risk of error as the teams can free up time for more strategic activities.

Clarity Software Evaluation: Evaluated Clarity Software, a Management Information System (MIS) specific to the print industry, to support decision-making and optimise business operations. This evaluation included creating customised workflows, simplifying the estimating and quoting process, and centralising price management.

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The comprehensive analysis covered every stage of the production process, including initial order processing, costing, creative design, layout, printing, and installation. By evaluating each step, Vyniline gained valuable insights into workflow bottlenecks and areas requiring more detailed analysis.

This support package was specifically designed to help Vyniline support the internal teams and efficiently interact with customers, partners, and suppliers as they aim to increase profitability and operational efficiency.

Impact

The support provided by the Horizons team has enabled Vyniline to improve workflow efficiencies. By analysing and optimising their existing workflows, Vyniline can expect smoother and more efficient production processes, reducing bottlenecks and delays that can result in profitability increase through reduced costs and improved customer satisfaction.

Introducing tracking through barcodes and IoT technology, the teams can accurately track jobs and their status, improving communication with their customers and clients for enhanced relationships whilst having greater insights across the production line and installation phases, improving data collection and supporting greater informed decision-making and investment choices in the future.

Since project completion, Vyniline has indicated the support has led to an estimated increase in productivity by 5% with further growth indicated for the future as they continue to use the tools they have developed in-house.

“Working with the LJMU Horizons team gave us access to their extensive knowledge and expertise. We worked closely together to better understand and analyse our business processes and provide a digital workflow simulation model. This tool allowed us to better assess and optimise our current and potential solutions, enhancing our operational efficiency and profitability. The support has been crucial in developing the right strategy for our business model and has helped us significantly to accelerate this.”

- Vyniline Signs & Graphics

