

Increased Productivity, Flow, AND Delivering FASTER than Anyone Expected!



By Mike Touzeau

There was a time when an American manufacturing CEO could make a change and it might not matter that much, but on today's global racetrack, each decision needs to reflect what everybody wants.

"We're waking up. We need to be smarter and faster and be willing to implement new ideas," acknowledged David Meares, president of AD Hawk Inc, machining operation in Reno that produces everything from the size of a pea to a breadbox for customers in aerospace, medical, military, electronics, etc., across America and abroad.

"I was looking for a way to control the flow. That's when I ran across VSS (Velocity Scheduling System). It set off an alarm bell that this had to be looked at."

Everyone knows that customers want a quality product delivered on time at a competitive price—no excuses, no waiting.

10% to 15% increase in 3 months.

Using his same people, Meares stated, he implemented VSS and achieved a 10-15 percent increase in productivity in just three months, which means his customers are more likely to get what they want when they want it.

Dr. Lisa Lang's training showed AD Hawk how to create "buckets"—breaking big jobs into smaller more manageable tasks that make it easier for his people to get to them quicker, thus getting the entire order out faster.

How about special or custom orders?

"We respond faster than they expect...even faster than we expect," he said.

"I hear from my employees that we have never produced that part so fast before."

Employees are happier.

Good people want to work where they feel they're an integral part of the operation, and often will accept less money if they love their jobs.

"Our employees are happier because they're more focused and they like that," Meares observed. "They know their role in this. They know exactly how they have an impact on the entire process."

AD Hawk floor leaders regularly gather together in front of the VSS board and immediately pinpoint problems, solve them, and let their operators know exactly what is needed from them. Workers can easily chart details throughout the shift.

"I can't express enough how visually simple it is," he said, "and it's manually based, so you don't need computers, which saves a lot in upfront costs."

VSS fills a missing need.

The boss obviously wants the operation to run smoothly with minimal cost—no surprises. And, don't hype them on something new unless they can see it will really make a difference.

With an industrial engineering degree and an MBA, plus 30+ years of experience in manufacturing, Meares admits that he's been a proponent of MRP and MRP II, which rely on educated guesses.

"But, I was always missing something. You'd get behind and not find out why till it was too late."

MRP is based on forecasts using data from previous jobs, so you often get fixed inventory orders higher than necessary, plus Meares was tied to the traditional principle of keeping all machines utilized all the time, which meant more wear and tear and labor costs.

"With VSS, you can find the constraint and focus on that. You don't worry about others as long as they don't impact that constraint. It's not about adding jobs; it's about speeding jobs through. I don't want to maximize use of machines; I want to maximize flow of jobs."

"It's a simple system to manage and it highlights when and where you have a problem and how to get out of the problem."

Immediate Improvement!

WOW!

Meares believes VSS will immediately improve anyone's operation. "Custom job shops are unique but, everybody still deals with tolerances, dimensional control, assembly, etc. 80% of improvement is method change, not materials or anything else," he stated.

"Dr. Lisa gives you enough free information to make a good decision. She knows her stuff. With the weekly conference calls, we've modified our system many times. She lets you grow into the program."

Meares now uses a two pronged approach—MRP principles and software to process the orders and shipping, and VSS to get the jobs done faster.

"VSS will be the backbone for us for years to come. I don't see the need for anything else. My biggest challenge is to get this so ingrained that we don't ever fall back on our old ways."

To learn specifically what Dave did to improve his shop, watch a 47 minute webinar on "How to Get More Jobs Done Faster" <http://www.velocityschedulingssystem.com>