17,300 Parts Easy
Maximise Profits With e2i

"e2i helps us to be quick, and makes sure we're efficient while we're being quick." So says Jason Austin, MD of Unifabs Ltd. And for a company that was manufacturing prototype samples less than 18 hours after an initial enquiry for 800 supermarket point-of-sale stands, speed and efficiency is their norm.

While the world's most powerful sheetmetal CAD/CAM software, Radan, drives their Amada punch/laser combination and punch press, the e2i multi-purpose management system is vital for achieving maximum potential from each job – and therefore maximum profit.

"Radan and e2i are as important to us as any machine," he says. "Everything we do is based around this software." Having set up Unifabs with a business partner in 2007, he took full control in 2011 and felt they were not reaching full potential on many contracts. Step in, e2i.

"When we estimate a job, in effect we're allocating the number of hours it'll take to complete, and using e2i we now record every hour that someone spends on it. For example, if we've quoted 50 hours for a contract and e2i tells us it's come out at 75 hours we analyse the data to see whether we quoted it wrong at the start or whether we're not as efficient on the shop floor as we should be."

Not that Unifabs are too far out with their original quotations nowadays. Jason Austin cites the 800 point-of-sale stands for a supermarket chain as a perfect example. "The initial enquiry came in at 4.30 p.m. with dxf files, quantities of each part and material spec for a total of 17,300 parts. With e2i we didn't need our CAD programmer to nest the parts quickly and get good material utilisation – I simply fed the data in – X, Y,

About The Company :

Name : Unifabs Ltd

Website : www.unifabs.eu

Benefits Achieved :

- Able to work out cost quickly and accurately.

- Quickly fulfil orders and ensure profitability.

Comments :

"From getting the part planned and generating the quotation from it is so quick. Then from the quotation stage, putting it on an order and generating route cards and a contract for the shop floor, we're talking minutes."

Jason Austin,
MD of Unifabs Ltd

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Z co-ordinates and material spec – then using sheet selection e2i very quickly told me told me how many parts we'd get to a sheet and the cost of the material, meaning I could give the customer an accurate price."

He says it was just one click to put the contract on to e2i, generating route cards displaying the material and the processes quoted for, which were passed on to the shop floor to make the samples. These were updated after the customer's sample approval.
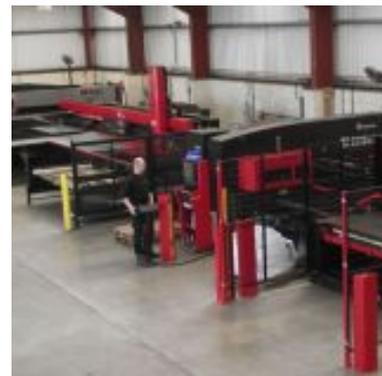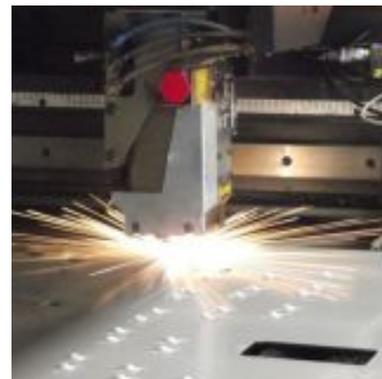
"As soon as we got the purchase order, all the information from the quote went through on to the contract. So even on a contract involving thousands of items, it only takes a couple of minutes to generate the route cards for the shopfloor." It also meant we could generate a quick PO for their suppliers, as they needed material the following day to start manufacture. And e2i handled the goods-in function just as efficiently.

"Because we'd planned the order correctly from the start, the route cards included the goods-in note for batch traceability, and when the CNC operator got the route card it showed the goods-in note number, the stock allocation and where the stock was in the factory."

Radan created the programs maximising material usage for hundreds of sheets of 1.5 mm and 3 mm CR4 mild steel to be cut overnight on their two automated Amada machines. Between them, the EML 3610 NT punch laser and the AE 2510 NT can process a total of ten tonnes of steel on an unmanned production run.

As each route card progressed across the shop floor an operative booked on their own part of the process. "When it got to the end of the end of the job we knew the last operation had been carried out, so at despatch we got the route cards together and generated the delivery note."

The combination of Radan and e2i meant Jason Austin could respond to the original query extremely quickly and then fulfil the order on time, while ensuring profitability. "From getting the part planned and

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generating the quotation from it is so quick. Then from the quotation stage, putting it on an order and generating route cards and a contract for the shop floor, we're talking minutes." And that's how Unifabs has built its reputation for speed of turnaround and consistent quality for the shopfitting and point of sale sector, the automotive industry, metal cabinets, shelving, brackets, storage facilities, and yellow goods.

"e2i generates quotes, pulls essential information together and creates accurate costs, then follows those costs and times during the job's lifecycle on the shop floor through to despatch and invoicing, ensuring we stay on top of every contract, hit the times we're looking for and make a profit.

"The good thing about e2i Shop Floor Data Capture giving constant feedback is that once we've delivered a contract we can look back over every aspect of it to see how well we've performed. In this economic climate we respond when our customers need us to, and Radan and e2i are the tools we use to achieve this."

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