

# Case Study

## KD Decoratives Ltd

55 employees, £4.5m turnover, based in Huddersfield



### Richard Kitchen-Dunn, Chairman

"I wish to thank MAS and Dean Morgan for the hard work and expertise that they have provided the directors and staff at KD Decoratives. With their support our family business has a more professional approach and has provided us a greater awareness and ability to manage our production times, operation costs, cash flow and profitability. The project has provided us with the right tools that we know we can build upon.

### Company Profile

KD Decoratives is one of the leading companies in the UK providing animatronics and themed grottos for Christmas displays for major department stores, shopping centres and theme park attractions.

It offers a full range of customer services from initial concept development, creative input on themes & displays, design formulation, manufacturing (including electronic designs, moulding, sculpting, and assembly), decorative presentation through to fitting and on-site management.

The family business has established an enviable reputation for providing companies, theme parks and shopping centres such as Harrods, P&O, Tussauds, Alton Towers and the Trafford Center. It provides first-class displays and attractions that add significant value to these major brands by providing their customers with inspiring and memorable visits to their themed events.

### Background

KD Decoratives sought the help of MAS, through Dean Morgan of MCCR & Associates, to review the efficiency of their manufacturing processes as they felt the operation was not meeting their expectations on product delivery performance.

The management team recognised that the business performance was underachieving and wanted to establish a more structured approach and review all aspects of activity to establish a strategic plan that would take the business forward.

### Key Achievements

As a result of a 10 day manufacturing efficiency project, KD Decoratives has achieved the following:

- Improved visibility on operational costs at the quotation stages and changes to financial support improved business profitability and cashflow. Estimated savings of over £80,000 pa.
- Reorganisation of local management to focus on task productivity and efficiency saving over £20,000 pa.
- Introduced a common quotation system providing significant reduction in lead times to project approvals and saving operational management time saving over £6,000 pa.
- Material savings by introducing measured usages on key hard coating operation saving over £2,000 pa.

# Making it Happen

MAS consultant Dean Morgan worked closely with the management team and staff to understand the complex nature of bespoke projects that are presented by K D Decorative customers.

The initial work involved a detailed review of all the individual operational department activities that have to be co-ordinated to produce the animatronic units, scenery and decorations.

By updating and refining an existing software tool, a greater structure was applied to the cost modelling used for the initial quotation phase. This helped to realise that greater input and involvement was required at an early stage by the lead operational managers.

The quote package was modified to provide financial models that would support profit and cashflow protection as well as providing clients with a greater number of payment options.

The operational software changes provided greater clarity on project expectations and offered a mechanism to track each stage of the manufacturing cycle in a more visible and managed way. Coupled with a more focused meeting forum, it also provided a firmer structure for capacity planning and resource allocation.

A specific activity improvement centred around the use of drummed PU- chemicals that are co-blended for the production of hardcoating material for scenery and grotto production. Greater control was provided on the mix-quantities by the introduction of an active weighing system .

As a result, the business is seeing a major increase in the number of projects being handled through the operation at their busiest time of year - the lead up to the hectic period in manufacturing preparation in time for Christmas displays.

## What KD Decoratives people said:

“By working with MAS, we have been able to improve our efficiency and reduce costs through discussion, review and amendment of our production work instructions. This has also led to a more positive work attitude on the shop floor.

We now have systems in place that can be built on for further improvement in the future.”

**Russell Brown,**  
Production Manager

### About MAS

MAS is a national DTI initiative, delivering practical, hands-on manufacturing advice and expertise to help you improve your performance. Delivered by experts with real-life knowledge and experience, MAS has already given advice to hundreds of businesses in Yorkshire & The Humber. Why not see how MAS can help your business?

### For more information

If you feel your business could benefit from MAS, why not complete your details below and fax to us on **0113 368 5261**. You can also contact: enquiries@mas-yh.co.uk or visit the website www.mas-yh.co.uk

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nature of Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like MAS to contact me to discuss (please tick box/es):

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Technical and materials issues           | <input type="checkbox"/> Managing organisational 'change' | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce training and development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lean manufacturing                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Process analysis                 |   |
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