Artitalia Group, Inc.

ACCELERATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CUSTOM DISPLAY FIXTURES WITH SOLIDWORKS

Using SolidWorks software, Artitalia accelerated time-to-market, reducing design and manufacturing cycles.

CHALLENGE:

Improve efficiency and accelerate delivery of custom-built display fixtures for top retailers.

SOLUTION:

Adopt the SolidWorks 3D CAD development platform to create an extensive parts library and accelerate time-to-market.

RESULTS:

- Cut design time by 40 percent
- Reduced time-to-market by 35 percent
- Decreased product assembly guide development by 35 percent
- Accelerated manufacturing processes by 25 percent

Artitalia Group, Inc., is a leading designer and manufacturer of custom-built display fixtures for top retailers ranging from Target and JCPenney to Microsoft and Loto-Québec. During its 25 years in business, the company has relied on the latest developments in design technology to handle the increasing number of new projects efficiently and cost-effectively. Recently, Artitalia management determined that the company needed to update its development platform and design methods to improve design performance and reduce product time-to-market, according to Max Ferrara, engineering development manager.

"One of the problems that we faced with our previous CAD program involved parts library management," Ferrara explains. "We also were experiencing enormous technical support difficulties with our prior CAD solution. It became vitally important to find a new solution with superior technical support that would provide fast and reliable responses to our requests for assistance. With an ever-increasing number of new projects in the pipeline, we needed to resolve these issues to increase productivity and reduce time-to-market."

After a detailed analysis of its existing design solution and available CAD programs, Artitalia decided to move to the SolidWorks® 3D CAD system. The company chose SolidWorks because it is easier to use and more intuitive, provides a wide array of tools and the ability to design in-context, and includes effective training and superior support by SolidXperts, Artitalia's local reseller.

"SolidWorks is the most user-friendly software and offers the best tools for our type of business," stresses Ferrara. "SolidXperts helped us set up the solution quickly and in a very professional manner."

3S SolidWorks

With SolidWorks eDrawings tools, Artitalia uses 3D design information to improve communications with its customers.

Improved performance speeds time-to-market

Since implementing SolidWorks software, Artitalia has cut its design cycles by 40 percent and has reduced time-to-market by 35 percent. Ferrara attributes these productivity gains to the improved capacity that SolidWorks provides for handling complex assemblies, customizing designs, and communicating with customers.

"SolidWorks makes motion simple, even for structurally complex assemblies," Ferrara notes. "With our old CAD program, we needed to perform three times the number of operations to do the same thing. It's simply faster and easier to develop products with SolidWorks, and our Marketing Department can use SolidWorks 3D templates to generate all associated product documentation. We have seen the time required to create product assembly guides decrease by 35 percent, which also contributes to our reduction in time-to-market."

Configurations streamline design

A SolidWorks capability that Artitalia finds particularly useful is the Design Configurations feature, which allows designers to create design variations from a single base design. "Configurations enable us to manage several similar parts within a single file," Ferrara points out. "Take a screw, for example. You can design the screw and save it in one file. Then you can allocate different lengths and different types of threads. Finally, you can use the screw in an assembly and modify it according to the specific requirements for that assembly.

"A powerful benefit of SolidWorks is that parts can be designed with multiple configurations and then easily forwarded to clients, so they can visualize the product's features," Ferrara adds. "That way, customers can check whether a drawer will open and close easily. By displaying a side view of a part or piece of furniture, they have a full view from different angles. With our previous CAD solution, the same operation required a large number of files, so the final file was too large to send and communicate to customers."

Better customer communications with eDrawings

One important reason why Artitalia has improved its communications with customers since moving to SolidWorks is the integrated eDrawings® design communications application, which allows designers to compact, package, and email designs quickly and easily. "Thanks to the eDrawings application, which our clients can download free of charge, our customers can validate, measure, revolve, enlarge, or reduce the template, all without prior knowledge of CAD software," notes Ferrara.

In addition to streamlining customer interactions with eDrawings files, Artitalia's use of the DécoupeXperts utility from SolidXperts has accelerated manufacturing processes by as much as 25 percent. "With the DécoupeXperts solution, we can now open up the assembly and provide specifications for certain parts," says Ferrara. "DécoupeXperts then provides us with a DXF™ file that can be read directly by the cutting machine. We also receive a full production report indicating the exact number of parts we need."