Faced with fierce global competition, at Ramaer we are constantly looking for ways to speed up processes, reduce errors and cut costs. For our front-end operations, from quoting to tool-generation, this means automation. We have worked in partnership with Ucamco for many years, starting in the Barco days. In July 2008 we installed their Integr8tor software to automate data input and analysis in the sales department. Today we can deliver faster and more accurate quotations. Our sales people are not just making quotes, they are quoting intelligently, based on a fuller understanding of the job and the customers’ requirements. By spending less time preparing quotations, the sales department have more time to follow up quotations with customers and prospects. For our customers Integr8tor has meant that they get an exact quotation faster and a more meaningful dialogue with us as suppliers.

Historically, as in most companies, our sales people prepared cost calculations against the customers’ written specifications or using a Gerber viewer. For anything but the simplest jobs this meant that they could miss potential production problems. When we received the order we had to swallow any additional costs ourselves or renegotiate the price with an unhappy customer. Complex jobs had to be sent to the CAM department for detailed analysis. This wasted valuable CAM time if we did not get the order. Today our sales people load the incoming data directly into Integr8tor. The software reads the CAM data automatically, builds the stack-up and runs a detailed design analysis within minutes. Integr8tor outputs a set of key figures which are entered into the costing system to provide an accurate price. In the majority of cases the process is entirely automatic. If the data is incomplete or ambiguous, Integr8tor flags up the issues and requests manual assistance via straightforward menus and clear on-screen graphics.

Some critical production information such as copper weights, board thickness or special materials cannot be embedded in Gerber data. Today this information is entered manually, which takes time, even with Integr8tor’s clear menu structure. One of the benefits we have found over the years we have worked with Ucamco is their fast response to requests for new functionality. They have already developed an intelligent reader which scans the customers’ specifications, automatically extracts this key non-Gerber data and enters it directly into Integr8tor.

We believe that our customers will respond very positively to this new functionality. They already appreciate the speed with which we can return a price to them and the knowledge that the price is exact. As Integr8tor runs a complete design analysis, we can feed back any manufacturability issues before we receive an order. Our customers appreciate the extra confidence that the job will be produced correct and without unexpected delays.

For our OEM customers Integr8tor brings an additional benefit. Our sales engineers can offer suggestions to enhance the manufacturability of their design, allowing them to cut the costs of production, improve yields (and hence lower costs) and enhance the boards long-term performance.

In summary, after 1 year in operation, Integr8tor has proved its value as an investment. Our costing and planning is faster and more accurate as it is based on a realistic understanding of each job as soon as it is received. We are confident that Ucamco has the engineering skill and expertise to work with us to develop the product even further to help us achieve our business goals.

John Kuitert
Financial Manager, Ramaer Printed Circuits bv

Ramaer, based in Helmond, Netherlands is a leading PCB manufacturer in Europe. Their mission is to ensure continuity trough superior products and services and to be a reliable partner for all customers, employees and suppliers.

Email: info@ramaer.nl - Web site: www.ramaer.nl