

Mohawk Industries Simultaneously Manages More Than 250 Projects Using RoboHead®

THE ORGANIZATION

Mohawk Industries has been in business for over 120 years and today is the leading producer and distributor of flooring worldwide. All major flooring categories—carpet, rugs, hardwood, laminate, ceramic tile, and vinyl flooring—can be purchased at an authorized Mohawk dealer for residential or commercial application.

Mohawk Creative, led by Creative Design Manager Allyson Faulk, is an integral part of the residential marketing department. The seven-person in-house team, supplemented by freelancers and studios, is responsible for a full range of printed materials. The clients of the creative group can be virtually any department in the company, with particular focus on promotion, national accounts, and aligned dealers.

Throughout the year, the creative team will fulfill more than 250 projects. Typical deliverables include product catalogs, POS material, sales literature, and customizable ads for retailers.

THE SITUATION

When Faulk joined the department, it was using an inadequate database—developed for the printing industry—for rudimentary project maintenance. There was no automated way to archive projects, communicate with clients, proof online, or track changes. With no project management system, neither Mohawk Creative staffers nor their clients could adequately track job progress, schedules, or budgets. As Faulk put it, “Clients came to us; they needed it; we did it as fast as we could.”

Furthermore, Faulk’s management was frustrated by the department’s inability to measure and track its progress. “They would ask me, ‘How do you know what you spent? How do you measure what you’re doing right or wrong?’ I couldn’t answer them. And when clients challenged schedules and told us projects were always late, we didn’t have the documentation to verify the dates on which we received their projects.”



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Clearly, Mohawk Creative required a project management tool designed specifically for creative services operations to address all stakeholder concerns. A former colleague of Faulk's recommended that she consider RoboHead from Aquent. As part of a due diligence process, she added two more solutions and began an evaluation.

THE EVALUATION

Selection Criteria

During the evaluation process, Mohawk Creative established a set of requirements that each project management solution needed to meet out of the box:

- ← Be a central, easily accessible repository for documents, images, and proofs
- ← Include a notification feature that alerts users to critical schedule milestones
- ← Maintain a calendar to keep all users apprised of job progress, schedules, and budgets
- ← Assign cost center numbers to ensure accurate billing assignment

The ASP Model

Two of the three options Mohawk considered were Web-based ASP solutions, including RoboHead. Ultimately, the ASP model—which requires no software installation and enables 24/7 remote access—emerged as the right one for Mohawk Creative. Their clients travel extensively during product tours; the ability to stay on top of creative projects while traveling was a critical advantage.

Implementing a browser-based solution had the added benefit of not requiring any involvement from IT. With no software to maintain, the busy IT group would not need to be called in to address any product hiccups, a process that could take days.

The Aquent Advantage

Faulk and her team ruled out the other two solutions and selected RoboHead. "The other Web-based product was less 'put together' than RoboHead; it didn't seem as turnkey or plug-and-play as we preferred. It also didn't offer the notification feature we needed," she said.

The installed solution, Mohawk concluded, was more of a financial tool and not particularly client- or designer-friendly. "To us, RoboHead had it all," said Faulk. "It was laid out very logically—very put together and user friendly. And it had the key features we demanded to address our internal issues."

Aquent's size and prominence also played an important role in Mohawk's selection process. It was critical that Mohawk select a solution that was reliable and backed by



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a substantial organization. “Aquent’s stature and strong market position were absolute determinants for us.”

IMPLEMENTATION

Training

Aquent’s RoboHead trainer traveled to Mohawk’s Dalton, Georgia, headquarters to lead the two-day training session. In all, 30 Mohawk employees went through RoboHead training. Faulk described her team as more intuitive with technology than many of their clients, “some of whom barely touch the computer.” She noted that a few clients were initially hesitant but that after the training, “they jumped right in and had no problems with RoboHead.”

Timing

Mohawk’s travel-intensive season was approaching just as RoboHead training concluded. Faulk was concerned that implementation was coming at a time when the creative group was too busy and its clients too scattered to properly use RoboHead. “I was concerned about starting out with big, time-critical jobs instead of an easy trial run,” explained Faulk.

Aquent made a convincing case, however, that a busy season was exactly the right time to implement RoboHead. The solution’s ease of use and intuitive interface would help Mohawk manage the increased seasonal workload. “Aquent was right,” admitted Faulk. “We started using RoboHead immediately and in full force, and there were literally zero problems. Our designers had no problem getting used to the program. Our clients—even those who hadn’t gone through training—just hopped on and never called with issues. It was an ideal launch,” concluded Faulk.

THE RESULTS

In its first six months, RoboHead has become indispensable for Mohawk Creative and its clients. “We finally have a project management tool that tracks and manages everything we need to know: schedules, budgets, approvals, billing codes,” said Faulk. “From the time a client fills out a creative brief and e-mails it to me, it’s uploaded into RoboHead and managed seamlessly.”

As the department manager, Faulk keeps track of everyone’s schedules and makes sure her employees log on to RoboHead every day. The creative team loves the calendar, which outlines tasks for each project they’re working on and sends friendly reminders of when things are due. “Frankly,” said Faulk, “the whole thing is something that we can’t live without.”



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Creatives and clients—and Faulk’s management—all appreciate the accountability RoboHead brings. “Before, we kept paper records. If something was missing, it was gone for good. With RoboHead, we have documented proof of everything that’s been done. If a client asks why a brochure looks a certain way, we can demonstrate when the client approved the layout. Conversely, if my team doesn’t do something correctly, we’re held accountable too.”

Perhaps the best testament to how Mohawk benefits from RoboHead comes from a client in the merchandising department. “He is not a technical person, and I didn’t think he would like or use RoboHead,” admitted Faulk. “Within a few months, he went from not wanting to touch it to being forced to use it, and now he can’t do without it. ‘You’ve turned me into a RoboHead monster’ is his greatest compliment.”

Following the successful rollout at Mohawk Creative, another 40 employees in a separate division of the company adopted RoboHead to track and manage account installations. This first use of RoboHead by a noncreative user group confirms that the solution’s versatility and flexibility allow it to adapt to the requirements of other departments.

