A SOLID SOLUTION FOR THE
MEDICAL INDUSTRY

Midmark Corporation, a privately held company founded in 1915, strives to bring efficient patient care to millions of people each day in the human and animal healthcare industries around the world. A leading provider of medical, dental and veterinary equipment solutions, Midmark is focused on continuously improving exam room workflow and enhancing patient-caregiver interactions. Midmark's more than 1,600 teammates worldwide are dedicated to redefining the future of the clinical space and making a positive difference in the practice of healthcare.

Headquartered in Dayton, Ohio, Midmark maintains production and administrative offices in Versailles, Ohio, as well as four subsidiaries in the United States and international subsidiaries in India and Italy.

The last two years have been busy for Midmark Corporation – a privately held manufacturer of medical, dental and animal health products headquartered in Dayton, Ohio, USA. Midmark supplies holistic solutions that improve exam room workflow and enhance patient-caregiver interactions around the world.

In 2013, Midmark chose to partner with Configura for a CET Designer Extension. The project involved multiple departments at Midmark, as implementing CET Designer was part of a much bigger companywide initiative.

A large, multi-faceted team helped Midmark go through a tremendous upgrade of its internal systems. The team included Michael Couch, marketing and product manager for Midmark's medical casework products; Lisa McNeilan, customer experience manager; and Joshua Felver, project manager.

Finding the right configurator

In 2012, Midmark had begun looking for a total solution that would enable the company to streamline internal processes and provide a seamless program for end-users. With the team of people representing the different divisions of the company that would be affected by the change, they started exploring the many options of configurators.

Midmark's desire to put rules into place made them especially interested in Configura and the concept of Parametric Graphical Configuration. The ability to build in rules to handle many different configurations and conditions was exactly what the company was looking for.

"In the selection process, we looked at it from a total solution standpoint, and CET Designer best fit our criteria for how we wanted it to work," Joshua said. "Our decision was mainly based on the ability to send attributes instead of part numbers, the communication we could do between CET Designer and our other systems, and the flexibility we had to make the software exactly what we wanted it to be."

By creating its own Extension, Midmark can customize workflows, rules, connections to ERP systems and create additional functionality based on its internal needs or the needs of its customers. The end result is an all-in-one solution – drawing, quoting, rendering and pricing that are all connected and can "speak" with other systems and software.

Implementing several new systems

Implementing CET Designer is usually performed in multiple steps. Midmark decided first to implement its medical and animal health lines. However, Midmark's plans for change went beyond CET Designer.

While Midmark decided to implement CET Designer, the company was simultaneously building a brand-new facility, installing new equipment, completely redesigning manufacturing processes and upgrading its entire internal structure for Casework, including new modules released in its ERP system. All of this work was done at the same time that Midmark was rolling out a new product line to be sold using CET Designer as the new design and specification tool.

"With everything so tightly integrated, we're not sure how we could've broken it apart," Michael said. "It was a challenge to coordinate all of these changes at once, but it resulted in a complete solution when our Synthesis® Casework Collection was launched."

WHAT ARE
ATTRIBUTES?

Before CET Designer, Midmark used to send Bill of Material part numbers from its old system into its ERP system. With CET Designer, the company instead sends attributes that describe how the item is being configured. When this information is imported into the ERP system, the attributes are configured into the Bill of Material part numbers. The major strength of this solution is the flexibility it gives Midmark to make changes in engineering without needing to update CET Designer.

Michael Couch, Marketing and Product Manager, Lisa McNeilan, Customer Experience Manager and Joshua Felver, Project Manager at Midmark.

Adopting software in an organization

Midmark primarily sells its products through a network of distributors, but all design work is done in-house as a service. This decision simplified the adoption process of CET Designer, as all users are Midmark employees working in the same building. They started the transition by using dual systems – keeping the old system for already-underway projects while gradually adopting CET Designer for all new projects.

"Especially during the transition period, our designers and coordinators cringed whenever they had to do a revision in the previous software, because designing is so much easier in CET Designer," said Lisa, who manages a group of 20 designers and coordinators. "Changing software is always more challenging for some than others, but today, none of our teams would want to go back. Now, they can't wait until we get the rest of our products into CET Designer."

The outcome: saving time and experiencing fewer errors

The biggest gain for Midmark has been seen when doing revisions, partly because of the improved 3D visuals and renderings that CET Designer provides. Designers can make real-time changes together with customers – anything from handle styles to panels and colors – which has altered the dynamic of customer meetings.
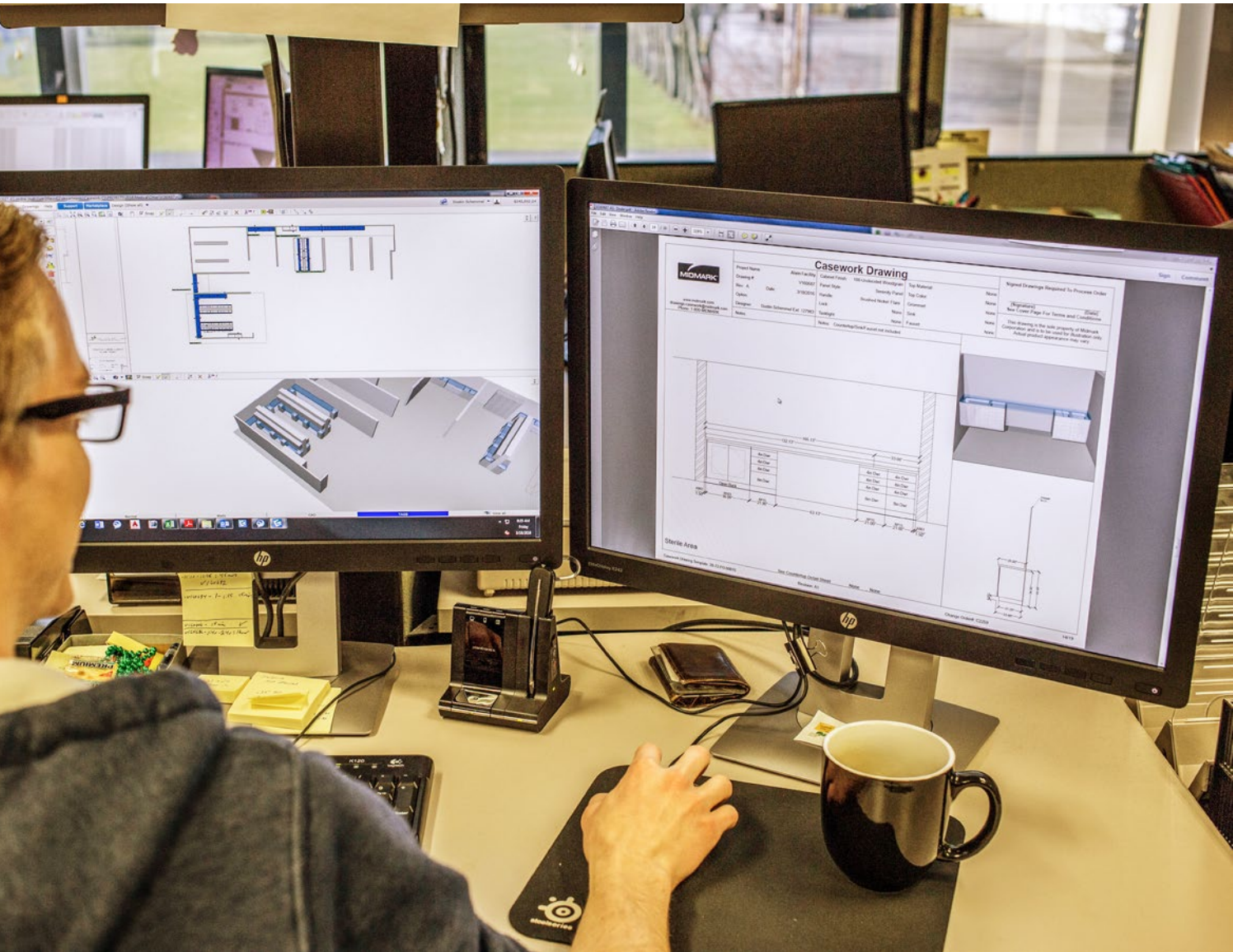
"We have a showroom with all of our products and, if we can get the floor plan and the layout before a customer comes to visit, then we place our products as they are in the visuals. It is a huge wow-factor when the customer sees their project being brought to life, especially because we can also give them a price estimate in real time," Lisa said.

Lisa says the customer feels more like an owner of their drawing package when they can visually see how a design is going to look. This flexibility also makes it easier to meet ever-changing customer demands and expectations in a timely fashion.

"Architects and designers especially are impressed when they see how simple it is to make changes on the spot and try new ideas. When we have that audience, we can reduce revisions and speed the process along. It's had a big impact," Lisa said.

Midmark can now offer their customers renderings of their projects. To the left is a rendering from CET Designer vs a picture of the final installation.

Another time-saver is how everything is connected – the drawing can "talk" to the pricing and automatically update it. This ability has been especially important for specifying countertops, which previously was very time-consuming and done in a separate program. Now, it's all connected, and prices are calculated in real time.

Midmark also experiences fewer errors with CET Designer – to the degree that its specifiers have been able to reduce the time they previously spent on proofing their work. In the first part of the year, as CET Designer was introduced, they triple-checked their work as they had always done. However, they are now confident in the accuracy of the software and have eliminated many of the proofing steps.

Looking for their own developers

The collaboration was Midmark's first experience working with Configura. The outcome has been very successful and a great learning opportunity for both parties. Several different programmers at Configura have been involved in the project, learning about Midmark's products and bringing their own expertise to the solution.

"The Midmark solution is now one of our most solid solutions, and a lot of that is because of good communication and the testing that Midmark performed," said Tim Deemter, production team leader at Configura. "Midmark knew what they were looking for, and made sure to note little annoyances and communicate these so they could be improved. They're now reaping the benefits of this work as they can be completely confident in the software."

Moving forward, Midmark is looking to hire its own internal developers. The CET (Configura Extension Technology) platform – the infrastructure that Configura has built for its Partner Program – makes this opportunity possible.

"Configura's developers have been great to work with, and it was especially good to have their support in the beginning," Joshua said. "Now that we know more, we're looking into hiring our own internal developers to keep costs down. Having in-house programmers will let us release updates faster, as we could make changes more rapidly with teammates who know the Midmark business."

With a good foundation to stand on, the Midmark story is only just beginning, and Configura looks forward to seeing where the coming years will take the company and their CET Designer Extension.