

Katzkin Achieves the Perfect Fit with Lectra

This leading U.S. custom interiors manufacturer partners with Lectra to optimize processes, eliminate production bottlenecks and double throughput to meet growing demand.

THE CHALLENGE

Katzkin was looking for cutting solutions to enable it to increase production and maintain a 24 hour delivery time, anywhere in the US, to meet a surge in demand.

LECTRA'S RESPONSE

Lectra proposed an integrated solution including fabric and leather cutting systems, VectorAuto and VersalisAuto, specifically designed to address the challenges of the automotive industry, as well as design, pattern-making and nesting software, with dedicated professional services to ensure swift and effective implementation.

LECTRA SOLUTIONS

Versalis[®]
Vector[®]
DesignConcept[®]
Diamino[®]



"We offer interiors for more than 3000 different vehicle applications and every interior can be ordered in more than 140 different colors and customized in many ways. Every interior consists of more than 200 parts and so there are literally millions of permutations and combinations of interiors" explains Brooks Mayberry, CEO of Katzkin.

THE CHALLENGE

Katzkin is currently experiencing a surge in orders and its automated cutting equipment was no longer able to handle the demands of working round the clock. With only 24 hours to cut, sew, and deliver up to 800 finished products each day, the company was obliged to employ manual cutters to complete daily orders on time. Multiplied over three shifts, this additional labor represented a significant increase in costs.

"Demand was growing but the cutting process was a bottleneck on our production floor. We were looking for ways to improve our technology and our manufacturing process" explains Mario Peregrina, VP of Manufacturing for Katzkin.

The team was therefore looking for ways to increase productivity, improve material use and control costs, while still being flexible enough to handle the growing demand from an expanding market, without compromising on lead time.

LECTRA'S VALUE PROPOSITION

In addition to investigating the bottleneck in cutting, Lectra's consulting approach involved a thorough check-up of the entire fabric manufacturing process, from pattern-making onwards. Lectra experts showed Katzkin that significant fabric savings could be made by reorganizing their processes before buying any new equipment. They took Katzkin patterns, and using Lectra's product development software, were able to show how these patterns could be optimized, by applying design-to-manufacture pattern-making principles.

With an optimized process in place, Lectra experts then looked at the workload and evaluated the need for automated fabric cutting systems. A first delivery of three VectorAuto iX9s was supported by a well-defined implementation program so that the teams were operational as soon as possible, and this was followed by delivery of another three.

The next step was to analyze the leather cutting process and identify possible improvements to efficiency. The subsequent investment in two VersalisAuto systems enables the company to cut very intricate shapes, ensuring high-quality pieces, reducing waste and optimizing production still further.

“It’s imperative that our product fit properly and that the quality is just as good as the factory quality, and the only way to achieve that fit is through precision cutting. Lectra provides us with that capability.”

Brooks Mayberry
CEO

NEW LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE

Productivity improved significantly, with operating efficiency at 70 percent, validating Lectra’s recommendations and increasing Katzkin’s confidence in Lectra’s ability to help overcome its challenges.

“The Versalis helped us double the output of the hides we cut per hour. We can now use fewer machines and be more productive. The Versalis is a very reliable machine that allows us to work 24 hours a day.” Mario says. *“We have a lot of confidence in our cutting process and the Versalis is a big part of that.”*

The Versalis was a key element in optimizing production and achieving material savings without compromising cut quality and time-to-market. It has made a tremendous impact on throughput, quality and efficiency. *“The thing I love about the Versalis is the speed with which it cuts, the efficiency, the precision and the nesting technology that it uses to maximize our yield.”* adds Brooks. *“All of the attributes of that machine are dramatically improved over the automated cutting machines that we had prior.”*

A LASTING PARTNERSHIP

Katzkin’s choice was influenced by Lectra’s position as market leader. *“We want someone who, like us, wants to create a long-term relationship, who’s going to be a true innovation partner looking out for our interests, and Lectra is the industry leader in our segment of the business.”* explains Brooks.

Lectra and Katzkin have forged a lasting relationship that extends deep into the manufacturer’s operations. In addition to the Vector and Versalis used at the company’s facilities in Montebello, California and Tijuana, Mexico, Katzkin has invested in multiple Lectra solutions including Diamino, for its high level of nesting efficiency and Lectra design software, DesignConcept, helping to optimize costs and improve quality.

Lean manufacturing is key for Katzkin’s process. Lectra is able to provide them with in-depth expertise and lean-compatible solutions. *“Lean manufacturing is an integral part of our manufacturing strategy. Lectra will be a perfect fit for us to integrate into that process. I think it will be great because the team that we have started working with, they have the experience and they have the knowledge.”* Brooks shares.

“We’re looking forward to a very long relationship between the two companies.” concludes Mario.

About Katzkin

Founded in 1983, Katzkin Leather, Inc., of Montebello, Calif., is the leading manufacturer of custom leather interiors. With a nationwide installer base featuring over 2,500 restyling locations, Katzkin has created more than one million exciting vehicle interiors in the past 30 years. Katzkin maintains more than 3,000 interior patterns, 140 colors and materials, and more custom options than any other interior manufacturer.



About Lectra

Lectra is the world leader in integrated technology solutions that automate, streamline and accelerate product design, development and manufacturing processes for industries using soft materials. Lectra develops the most advanced specialized software and cutting systems and provides associated services to a broad array of markets including fashion (apparel, accessories, footwear), automotive (car seats and interiors, airbags), furniture, as well as a wide variety of other market sectors, such as aeronautical and marine industries, wind power and personal protective equipment. Lectra serves 23,000 customers in more than 100 countries with 1,400 employees. The company is listed on NYSE Euronext.

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