



Matrix Helps **Suttle-Straus**
Do More with Less

FOUNDED IN 1910,
SUTTLE-STRAUS IS AN
AWARD-WINNING COMPANY
THAT HAS GROWN FROM
TRADITIONAL PRINTER TO A
FULL MARKETING SERVICES
PROVIDER OFFERING DESIGN,
OFFSET AND DIGITAL PRINTING,
MAILING, FULFILLMENT AND
WEB-TO-PRINT STOREFRONTS.

Today, with annual sales of \$38 million, Suttle-Straus has a proven strategy for success: exceed customer expectations, attract and maintain a great workforce, and implement new technologies to increase quality and efficiency. Ted Straus, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, says that selecting LithoTechnics Metrix software perfectly aligned with the company's founding tenets – and future plans.

“Metrix has allowed our planning and prepress departments to work in much greater synergy. Labor savings alone have been \$60,000 to \$80,000 – or 2,850 hours – each year.”



TED STRAUS, VICE PRESIDENT
AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The Vision

1

To speed workflow, and improve efficiency and accuracy, Suttle-Straus sought a single application that would improve estimating, handle planning, and do the imposition at the same time.



As a company offering offset and digital printing, including wide format and variable data, the planning and prepress departments at Suttle-Straus were continually looking for ways to streamline their processes. Many projects offered the opportunity to gang jobs, including catalogs, labels, posters and direct mail pieces – often with complex die cuts. Working with Preps® and UpFront® had proved to be cumbersome and limited in scope. When Suttle-Straus found LithoTechnics Metrix, they knew it was the right tool for the job.

“When we realized that Metrix would allow us to accomplish planning and imposition with a single application,” reports Straus, “we knew we had found a powerful enabling technology. It not only streamlines our current workflow, it also lays a foundation for future growth.”

“We are phasing out our use of Preps and UpFront completely,” says Ted Straus.

“Metrix is a much more powerful, versatile and easy-to-use solution.”

The Implementation

2

Within three days of installation, Suttle-Straus was using Metrix to plan and impose complex jobs, and achieved an average 50% increase in productivity.



The Impact

3

Metrix has not only streamlined and standardized the estimating-planning-prepress workflow, but has enhanced the overall communication and understanding between departments.



On the very first day of training, the Suttle-Straus planning and prepress employees were diving into some of the company's most complex jobs, and successfully exporting JDF files into their Prinergy workflow. **"For the first time, estimators, planners, and prepress operators were using the same application,"** says Ted Straus. **"It was immediately obvious that completing both planning and imposition in one step was going to dramatically cut down on overall project time."**

By defining a project plan further up-stream, at the estimating stage, Straus says the company can "use the full brain power of Metrix." Within seconds, Metrix offers recommendations for project layouts, allowing the estimator to quickly identify the most cost-effective plans. Straus notes that in a price-sensitive industry, Metrix positions them to get the most competitive price to market.

Straus reports that they've substantially increased the proportion of press runs that combine multiple items, but surprisingly, that this has benefited color consistency. Straus adds, **"I hear from our planning department that they're able to visualize the press sheet much better with Metrix, and therefore able to think about the product much further downstream."** As well, Metrix has rid the workflow of data re-entry errors, and removes the chance of mis-communication. Ted Straus summarizes, **"With Metrix, we get it right from the start."**

The labor savings brought about by Metrix, which were immediate, have now grown to an estimated \$60,000 to \$80,000 per year. "When you put an easy-to-use, yet highly powerful tool in the hands of good employees, you not only see financial benefits, you make their work day better," says Ted Straus.

"Metrix is feeding the majority of our print applications across the board – from the large presses all the way down to the duplicators and the NexPress. **Metrix is a hybrid tool that fits as well in estimating as in planning as in prepress – eliminating touch points and steps all along the way."**

The company's next step will be to integrate Metrix with its PrintStream MIS system, and Straus expects significant productivity gains from that, as well. **Looking ahead, it's important to Suttle-Straus to work with a company like LithoTechnics that rapidly advances its product and its technology, maintains an open architecture, and works at building open lines of communication with its users.**

"All companies are looking to do more with less these days. As we pursue our mission to eliminate waste in our processes, enabling technologies like Metrix will allow us to continue to grow with our existing resources."

"With Metrix, we get it right from the start."



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