

## INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY

# Metal Design

Achieving a record monthly production up to three times more while using the same resources

### Product

Opcenter

### Business challenges

Overcome limitations from using homemade, custom-built planning and scheduling tools

Streamline planning and scheduling to manage customer demand

### Keys to success

Use Opcenter Scheduling to streamline planning and scheduling processes

Integrate Opcenter Scheduling with a new ERP system

### Results

Achieved a record monthly production of three times more while using the same resources

Reduced time to prepare and import data from hours to minutes

Reduced time to simulate customer orders from up to four hours to about 15 minutes per inquiry

Improved customer confidence in the company

### Metal Design uses Opcenter Scheduling to streamline planning and scheduling and improve customer confidence

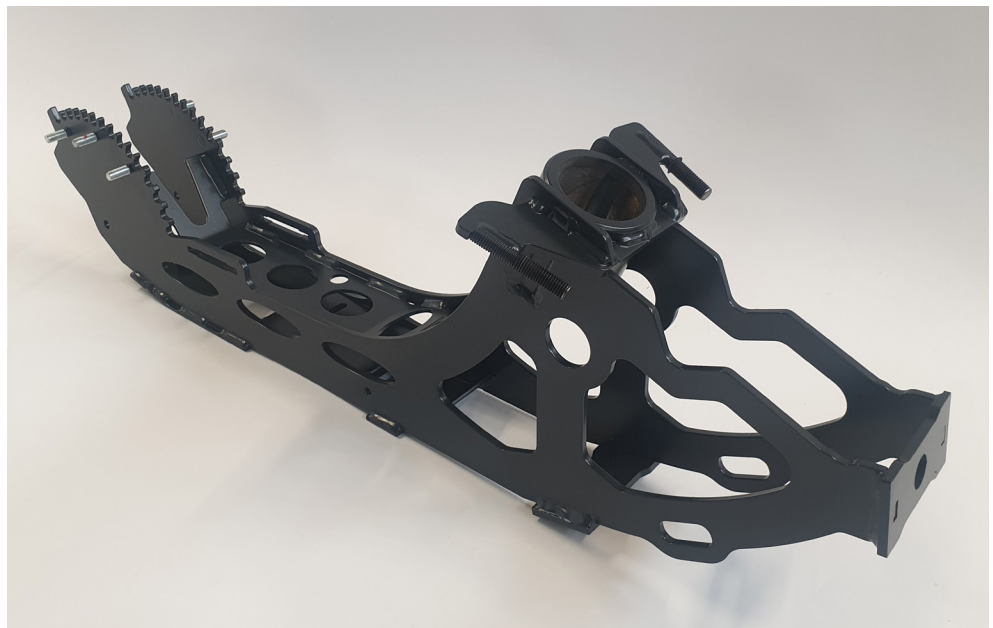
#### Ensuring consistent and reliable quality

Metal Design develops, optimizes and produces technologically demanding metal products and machine components and is an international partner of several West European companies.

With more than 30 years of experience in manufacturing metal parts like welded compounds, sheet metal products and milled parts, they ensure consistent and

reliable quality. Their vision is to become a recognized company in Europe for manufacturing complex and technologically demanding metal components in advanced industrial sectors such as green technologies, agricultural machinery, automated vehicles for internal logistics and medical industries.

Since its founding, the company has offered a complete range of production operations and expanded them by investing in new technologies. This growth gradually complicated operational planning. Production processes must follow a precisely timed sequence based on the bill-of-materials (BOM), ensuring optimal machine use,





efficient operator deployment and strict adherence to customer delivery deadlines. Managing these demands has become increasingly challenging, especially as the company shifts its focus to producing highly technical items with a multilayered BOM and complex production methods.

To overcome these challenges, Metal Design teamed up with INEA d.o.o. (Inea), a Siemens Digital Industries Software partner, leveraging Opcenter™ advanced planning and scheduling (APS) software. Opcenter is part of the Siemens Xcelerator business platform of software, hardware and services.

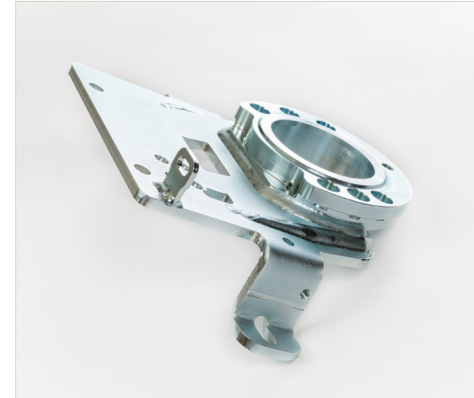
#### **Overcoming inefficient processes via digital transformation**

At the beginning of the digitalization project, Metal Design used a simple enterprise resource planning (ERP) system provided by a local information technology (IT) vendor and a free version of a production planning software. The next step was to have an in-house IT administrator developing custom applications to assist with planning and scheduling, as well as tasks like item sorting, BOM checks, tracking production time and stage of completion, etc.



Using Opcenter Scheduling, I can efficiently schedule the whole shop floor and all the shifts and quickly respond to a customer's inquiries."

Karin Kodele  
Production Coordinator  
Metal Design



However, this process was imperfect. Metal Design's production planning and scheduling was a mixture of in-house planning tools and manual adjustments by the production manager, who had an in-depth knowledge of all the items and manually adjusted monthly and weekly production plans while also coordinating daily activities. Eventually, the company started to test various software for scheduling while keeping the in-house applications to communicate between the ERP and the scheduling program demo versions.

This blend of solutions based on intuition and complex managing of various home-made tools became unsustainable, and the IT administrator could no longer optimize the plan using custom-built tools. Additionally, they were not making an efficient use of any software this way.

The company took the significant step towards a digital transformation by opting to replace the ERP and upgrade the production scheduling software simultaneously.

#### **Choosing Opcenter to streamline scheduling**

The production manager initially tested three APS software solutions in demo versions based on Metal Design's data and state of production to become familiar with its capabilities before purchasing. Overall, the company chose Opcenter Scheduling, which is part of Opcenter APS, due to its user experience, scalability and successful solving of scheduling challenges during the initial testing phase. Additionally, the production manager was already familiar with the solution from his time at university studying mechanical engineering, showing the importance of Siemens' cooperation with academia.

The final deciding factor came after receiving an urgent order from a customer, which looked like the company could not complete on time. However, using Opcenter Scheduling proved them otherwise after simulating and scheduling the order, accounting for existing orders and shop floor constraints and using what-if scenarios, persuading the production manager to choose this solution.

**"In the old system, it took us up to two hours to prepare and import the data, but with Opcenter ERP integration, we only need to press one button and wait for a few minutes."**

Karin Kodele  
Production Coordinator  
Metal Design



Opcenter Scheduling was the best fit because it's the most optimal for our needs and the size of the company, providing all the necessary functionalities at an affordable price."

Jerneja Curk  
Assistant General Manager  
Metal Design

"Metal Design's dedication to finding the best solution was clear at the first meeting," says Tomaž Grabnar, head of the Opcenter APS program at Inea. "Their team kept the same level of determination throughout the entire project, and I'm sure they now have the solution they were searching for. Their results confirm this."

#### Implementing Opcenter Scheduling

Implementation began with a detailed analysis of all processes, requirements, production operations and parameters across all production cells. It was the perfect time for the company to go through the data and add or correct it.

Afterwards, the data from Opcenter Scheduling started displaying on several departments, like technology, procurement, sales and production, providing answers and helping with daily issues.

"Opcenter Scheduling was the best fit because it's the most optimal for our needs and the size of the company, providing all

the necessary functionalities at an affordable price," says Jerneja Curk, assistant general manager at Metal Design. "Using Opcenter and with the assistance of Inea, we have advanced our production scheduling to a higher level."

Precise parameter settings, capacity adjustments and understanding the program's capabilities allowed Metal Design to achieve a significantly improved standard of scheduling. A crucial step was integrating the new ERP system with Opcenter Scheduling using web services because it improved the accuracy of scheduling the manufacturing operations and inputting the scheduled data into their business intelligence (BI) system.

"In the old system, it took us up to two hours to prepare and import the data, but with Opcenter ERP integration, we only need to press one button and wait for a few minutes," says Karin Kodele, production coordinator at Metal Design.

**"Our B2B clients are always impressed when they find out we use Siemens' Opcenter Scheduling, so it helps develop client confidence that we will deliver as agreed, which benefits business development a great deal."**

Polona Curk  
Director of Business  
Development  
Metal Design



## Solutions/Services

Opcenter Scheduling  
siemens.com/aps

## Customer's primary business

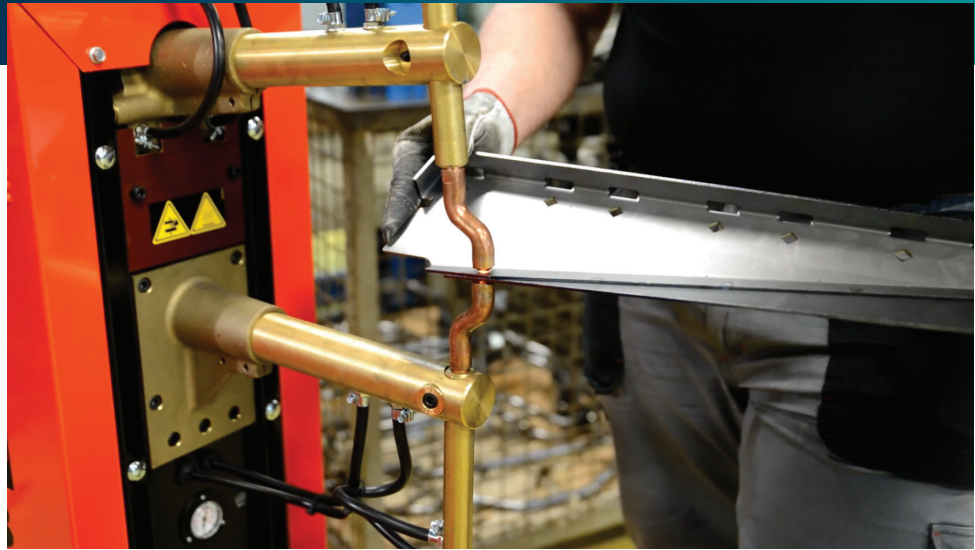
Metal Design, an international partner of several West European companies, is known for their welded compounds, sheet metal products, milled parts and furniture. Skilled staff develop metal components in the shortest possible time, from creating technical drawings and preparing tools and templates to developing prototypes, sample production and serial production.  
www.metaldesign.si/en

## Customer location

Ajdovščina  
Slovenia

## Solution Partner

INEA d.o.o.  
www.inea.eu



With Opcenter, Metal Design could organize and lead production, achieving a record monthly production, three times more than the usual average monthly quantities, while using the same resources. This was done by optimizing changeover times on specific machines that are crucial for the production process.

Metal Design often needs to simulate when they could finish a potential customer order before receiving and opening work orders in the ERP. This process previously took up to four hours per inquiry; however, using the order inquiry functionality in Opcenter Scheduling, this process takes about 15 minutes.

"Using Opcenter Scheduling, I can efficiently schedule the whole shop floor and all the shifts and quickly respond to a customer's inquiries," says Kodele. "Working with Inea, support is at the highest level, and their quick and efficient response always surprises me."

"We have several long-term B2B partners and over 700 different parts in production," says Polona Curk, director of business development at Metal Design. "It is essential for our partners to get their parts on time so there are no delays in their own processes, and without detailed scheduling, this would be impossible. Our B2B clients are always impressed when they find out we use Siemens' Opcenter Scheduling, so it helps develop client confidence that we will deliver as agreed, which benefits business development a great deal."

## Optimizing the future

After successfully implementing Opcenter Scheduling, Metal Design's future plans include optimizations that take into account the employees' skill matrix. They also want to move from displaying the schedule information on general overviews to personalized ones for each production cell on the shop floor.

## Siemens Digital Industries Software

Americas 1 800 498 5351  
Europe 00 800 70002222  
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