

System streamlines veneer sourcing

Problem:

How do you make the veneer ordering process more accurate and efficient?

Solution:

Take advantage of innovative online inventory and ordering system.

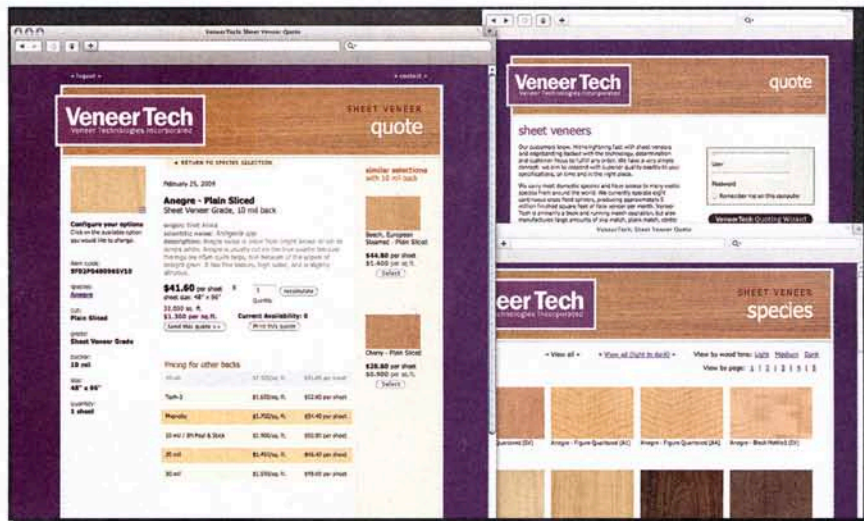
Ordering veneer for a big project often presents challenges and requires lots of back and forth between specifiers, shops, distributors, and suppliers trying to work out availability, specifications, and pricing. When ready supply is not available for one selection, it's often difficult to readjust specifications. Veneer Technologies, a major veneer supplier, came up with an innovative solution in an online inventory and ordering system the company calls the Quoting Wizard.

"This proprietary Veneer Tech quoting system has the potential to revolutionize our industry," says John Varner, Veneer Tech vice president. "It provides not only better pricing but greater speed, greater accuracy, more money-saving options for any customer, and helps ensure certain delivery promises. It can do that not in days or hours but in seconds, so a vendor can pass along the information during a phone call or a face-to-face meeting with a client."

How it works

The system is entirely Web based. Users use a sign-in and password to access it over the Internet. The opening page presents a battery of species samples. Click on any of those species, and you'll be taken to a page that lists extensive information about specifications and availability.

Information includes both the com-



The Veneer Technologies Quoting Wizard allows you to instantly determine pricing and availability of sheet veneer in a variety of backing configurations with customer volume discounts already reflected.

mon and scientific name of each species, where it comes from, and a detailed description. You can configure veneer options such as cut, figure, grade, size, backer, component matching, and sheet matching. Because the system is custom keyed to each user, specific discount structure and pricing is already built in, and each user sees accurate pricing.

Most importantly, the current availability is posted right on top. And if what the customer wants is not immediately available, many alternative backing options, their price and availability are also right there for comparison.

Using it in the field

Zak Randolph, inside sales for Hood Distribution McEwen Group, says he uses the system very frequently. "I have it pulled up on my home page," he says. "I like the fact that you can click on species, see whatever cut you're looking for,

see if it's on shelf, and then you can just type in the quantity and submit it."

After using the system for about a year and a half, Randolph says he is hooked. He especially likes the ability to get an immediate response.

"I'm able to check things right away, so we're able to close more deals faster," he says. "I think it's very innovative and very helpful. Productivity-wise, it's a lot more efficient."

Even with enthusiastic users like that, a few customers might have been reluctant to use the new system, fearing that it would not be accurate.

"It is updated every day," says Alan Hubbard, team leader for face and import sales at Veneer Tech. "We want it to be as accurate as possible. We want it so they can pretty much bet the farm on it."

For specifics call 1-800-593-5601 or e-mail Alan Hubbard, ahubbard@veneertech.com.