

# Newsletter



Bill Soule, IT Director,  
Schefenacker Vision Systems

## Delivering on Expectations

*Executive Spotlight on Bill Soule, IT Director,  
Schefenacker Vision Systems*

In any business, quality and reliability are vital to maintain a competitive advantage, a good reputation, and a loyal customer base.

Bill Soule, IT Director at Schefenacker Vision Systems, knows this firsthand. When service levels at his company suffered because of the complexities arising from an increasingly diverse customer base, he contacted PICS for help. "We needed help managing the technology we had in place," he said.

The challenge: Tweaking customer ship-delivery schedules. Some customers wanted goods delivered on a requirement basis, others asked for parts to ship based on cumulative orders, and still others wanted different types of delivery schedules. Because Schefenacker had never before managed such a wide range of delivery models, the company often had trouble getting the right parts to customers at the right time.

PICS consultants helped Schefenacker employees analyze each EDI configuration in the company's MFG/PRO system. "We looked at how the system generated schedules, and worked the parameters to meet each customer's needs," he says.

Because Schefenacker can now use its system to anticipate customer needs, it saves time and money (see sidebar), and customer ratings have skyrocketed. "Our delivery ratings have improved by more than 30 percent," he says. "We're now in the high 90s."

### Bottom-Line ROI

Working with PICS consultants enabled Schefenacker to substantially decrease freight costs, downtime, and overtime expenses.

### Here's the Breakdown

"Because we have the right product at the right time, we're not spending a lot of money expediting deliveries through FedEx or private transport," Soule says.

### Freight Costs Savings

Q3 2005 - Q1 2006  
88.1%

### Overtime Reduction

Q3 2005 - Q1 2006  
46.2%

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## Bigger and Better

Soule is now working with PICS on more ambitious projects to help his company get the most out of its business system. "We're deploying technology to support world-class processes," he says. "Data-based automation, coupled with technology that enables instant access to real-time information, will help us meet new challenges."

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**"Our delivery ratings have improved by more than 30 percent."**

## Founder's Message – Terry Rossi

As we finish our tenth year of providing technology services to our customers, it reminds me of what it was like then and just how radically everything has changed. Those of you who know me know that I have been involved with the Internet for almost 15 years. That dates back to when we “gophered” information instead of “Googling” it. Back then, we had just started to hear about Tim Berners-Lee and his beta software for something he called the “World Wide Web”. PICS Online then was the PICS Online BBS (Bulletin Board System), and we had one computer, one telephone line, and one modem for each concurrent user. People used to get busy signals waiting for a open line. When was the last time you got a busy signal? Long distance at that time was about 30 cents a minute and the modems were lightning fast at 19200 baud. File downloads took hours.



How different is it today? Well, for starters, we install software from the Internet just as easily as we used to from Novell Netware drives. Remember Novell when it was the only LAN game in town – where are they now? And speaking of disk drives, storage space that used to take up an entire rack in a server room is now on your keychain for under a hundred bucks.

Enterprise software installations are also a lot different today than they were ten years ago. Recently I have shown MFG/PRO customers that a \$5,000 Dell “PC” running RedHat Linux can run circles around a large \$200,000 “multi-user” mini computer with some big bucks O/S. We have replaced entire rooms full of computer equipment with a single rack-mounted server and disk array. (continued on page 7)

## Founder's Message – Richard Rosenthal



It takes hard work to complete ten successful years in this industry. We have put a lot into developing the solutions and services that help power your businesses, we know that there's one reason we're doing as well as we are.

### **You.**

This newsletter, the first for PICS, features just a few of your successes. We are recognizing the people who have worked with our consultants, our programmers, and Terry and me to build better businesses. Although many of our customers are different – and have different goals and business models – they have one thing in common: they are willing to embrace technology to improve their businesses.

In this issue read how Bill Soule, IT Director at Schefenacker Vision Systems, has worked with PICS consultants to increase delivery ratings by an amazing 30 percent.

Hear about Scott Sangster's story, a financial analyst at Medtronic ERS, who partnered with Cindy Allred and other PICS consultants to correctly post revenue of \$500,000 that was previously missed.

I would like to thank Barry Dinetz, president of KIT Industries, who told us how his new Web site makes ordering easier for customers, and to Nick D'Angelo, who uses SysTrak to keep...

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S y s T r a k

Want to know which options and reports are most helpful? Or, interested in learning more about what your users are using – and doing – on a daily basis? SysTrak maintains a customizable system-wide audit trail of all user actions, including:

- Logging in & out, abnormal exits, and exits to Progress.
- All menu selections, and programs accessed.
- All reports and inquiries run, with selection criteria and printing options used.
- All usage of hot keys, and user menus.
- Resource usage, such as CPU, Disk I/O and Record Locks.
- Recording can be customized at the user level.

**Detailed reporting is available for all aspects of the audit trails, from system-wide use of report selection criteria to the recent actions of an individual user.**

*For more information about SysTrak, please contact Terry Putman at [sales@pics.com](mailto:sales@pics.com)*

## Speeding the System

*SysTrak helps Senior Unix DBA Unlock Resources, Save Time, and Increase Productivity*

Getting to the bottom of system performance issues can be frustrating and time-consuming. Just ask Nick D’Angelo.

When he took over as Senior Unix DBA at i-STAT, a Canadian medical device manufacturer with headquarters in the Princeton, NJ area, he inherited more than 300 MFG/PRO system customizations. About 75 percent of these were undocumented, and many others were out-of-date or unnecessary.

“It was a big problem,” he admits. The system was often slow and sluggish, and upgrades were painful. “It could take several hours to move a single customization from one version of the software to the next,” he says.

Luckily, he discovered SysTrak, PICS’ total monitoring solution for MFG/PRO. SysTrak offered D’Angelo immediate visibility into what was happening within MFG/PRO – and what was causing problems.

“With SysTrak, we learned that one of our users was running an undocumented report – every morning – that used more than 50 percent of our system’s CPU capacity,” D’Angelo says. After discovering the problem, he was able to rewrite the report; now, it uses only a fraction of the resources.

He’s also working to determine which of the remaining customizations and built-in reports are still necessary, and which ones are no longer needed. “We’re using SysTrak to view the number of times each of our users runs particular reports,” he says. “This way, there are no conflicts over what’s actually needed.” As a result, he says, his system runs more smoothly and uses less hardware, making it unnecessary to purchase additional resources.



He also uses SysTrak to view logins – and failed login attempts – which is helpful for audits. He says investing in the software was a “no-brainer”. “It’s a really neat tool,” he says. “it’s saved us a lot of time and labor.”



Communication is Key

According to Cindy Allred, one of the PICS consultants who worked with Medtronic ERS, good communication between her and the customer helped expedite a solution: “It allowed us to completely understand the issues, as well as the business reasons for why they were using the system as they were. This enabled PICS to propose solutions that worked for all of the departments involved.”

■ **What PICS Consultants Offer**

PICS provides comprehensive consulting services, including:

- Project management
- Upgrades
- Software development
- Technical Consulting
- Application Support
- Training
- Implementation
- Application Integration
- Remote Database Administration
- Application Consulting
- Business Process Re-engineering
- Remote DBA Service

## The Total Package

*PICS Consultants Help Revamp Technology, Business Processes – and Find \$500,000 Along the Way*

As the country’s leading provider of external defibrillators, Medtronic ERS does much more than manufacture and sell lifesaving devices. They are also committed to providing total service and support.

But, when the numbers in Medtronic ERS’ general ledger weren’t adding up because of discrepancies between sales and service invoices, leadership at the company knew they had to contact someone who understood their business system and the processes behind it.

They called PICS. “We needed help from someone specializing in MFG/PRO and really familiar with how our system crunched numbers,” says Scott Sangster, a financial analyst at Medtronic ERS.

## The Challenge

When PICS consultants started working with Medtronic ERS, they developed a list of several challenges to tackle. Among them: determining methods of calculation within the MFG/PRO system, and investigating processes to understand rationale behind how contracts and sales were invoiced. They also needed to work with Sangster to determine what revenue should have been recognized prior to the consulting engagement.

The consultants combed through the system to determine which areas of MFG/PRO impacted the faulty figures. They worked with Medtronic ERS employees to understand how they used the system, and to develop better, more efficient processes.

Sangster was pleased with the PICS consultants’ approach. “They looked at code, figured out the logic behind the problem, and customized it to better suit the new processes we developed,” he says. “I was surprised that they’d go to such lengths to figure things out.”

## The Results

According to Sangster, the consulting engagement made a “huge” difference in Medtronic ERS’ processes and its bottom line.

As a result of the engagement, consultants “found” roughly \$500,000 in service order revenue that was collected but never reflected in the general ledger. This money was sitting in the bank, unspent. “Now we’re putting it to better use,” says Sangster. Employees at the company also enter sales and service orders into the system more logically and efficiently, resulting in increased productivity and a more accurate GL.

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Cindy Allred, Consulting

## Employee Spotlight: Cindy Allred

### *PICS Consultant Applies Hands-On Experience to Help Customers Achieve ROI*

Working with a seasoned professional can simplify even the most difficult task. And when it's time to implement, develop, or manage the technology that powers your business, an expert can help you finish any project more efficiently and easily – saving you time and money.

With this in mind, PICS has a team of consultants available to help you build, improve, and enhance your technology infrastructure. Each PICS consultant is an expert in his or her field, and carries a wide breadth of industry experience. In addition, because each consultant has worked with many other companies, he or she carries vast knowledge of different processes and procedures, and knows what will work best in your business.

### Proven Methodology

With more than seven years experience at PICS, Cindy Allred is just one member of the company's consulting team. Before starting her career at PICS, Allred spent more than ten years working for a large group of manufacturers. As part of the company's transition team, she worked in a variety of different roles, but focused on IT and the company's MFG/PRO solution. She also worked as Materials Manager, Cost Controller, and on the plant floor, gaining valuable experience that's helpful when she now engages with customers. "I understand my customers' situations and goals because I've done a lot of their jobs myself," she says.

According to Allred, she and other members of the PICS consulting team - each with similar backgrounds - approach any project as a partnership. They work with customers to understand their challenges and develop solutions tailored to their needs, using a proven methodology based on real-world experience.

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**"I understand my customers' situations and goals because I've done a lot of their jobs myself."**

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And, most importantly, Allred and the rest of the PICS consultants strive to listen, learn, and understand exactly what their customers hope to achieve. "We want to know what the customer wants – and why he or she wants it", she says. "Whether we're working on a huge implementation or a basic report enhancement, we make every attempt to give our customers exactly what they ask for," she says. "Helping our customers become more efficient and productive are some of our biggest rewards."

#### Advice from an Expert: Q and A with Cindy Allred

**Q:** What advice would you offer customers managing any project involving technology?

**A:** It is really important to complete an up-front study examining where you are and what issues you face before trying to change anything. Then, you should use this information to set clearly-defined goals for your project. Get everyone involved to agree upon these goals before the project is started. This way, everyone understands the expectations and can measure the success of the project when it's complete.

#### Want more Expert Advice?

Visit [www.pics.com/tips](http://www.pics.com/tips) to get more out of your MFG/PRO system.

## KIT Industries - A New Face

*Updated Web Site Helps Business Project Professional Image and Increase Hit-to-Order Ratio*

A Web site is often the first – and sometimes only – channel through which your customers work with your company. Therefore, it's especially important to project a professional, modern image.

Barry Dinetz, president and owner of KIT Industries, recognizes this. For years, his company's Web-based storefront, [www.porc-a-fix.net](http://www.porc-a-fix.net), was outdated and hard to navigate. "It just didn't flow," Dinetz says. "It was something we put together ourselves," So, when he realized that a user-friendly, easily-navigable site would greatly benefit his business, he asked PICS for help.

PICS offers businesses a full suite of Web services, from design and development to Internet marketing and Web hosting. "We deliver e-commerce solutions that work, so our customers can focus on their businesses instead of building Web sites," says Terry Rossi, PICS co-founder and CTO.

Dinetz agrees. "PICS was able to develop solutions we might not have even considered," he says. "They know about the technology behind our business system."

### Starting the Project

KIT Industries sells a unique product line: a huge assortment of hard-to-find, color-matched porcelain, fiberglass, and laminate repair kits. To develop a Web site that showcased these offerings while ensuring intuitive ordering capabilities, Dinetz met with PICS representatives to discuss his business – and his customers' needs. "We work with customers to understand their needs and expectations up front," says Don Kleinschmidt, Internet Services Manager at PICS.

After working with Dinetz to create a vision for KIT Industries, the PICS team began work. They created an attractive, feature-rich site that makes it easy for customers to access information about any one of the company's offerings. "The new site has certainly simplified the customer inquiry process," Dinetz says. "Customers can use it to research all of our products. Because it's an all-encompassing source, we're not fielding as many phone calls and e-mails as before."

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### www.porc-a-fix.net Site Highlights

- **Intuitive User Interface**  
Users expect to access a site that is easy to use and provides a pleasant shopping experience.
- **Real-time credit card processing**  
"The site now processes credit cards right away, so KIT knows that orders are approved, and they can ship as soon as possible," says Don Kleinschmidt, Internet Services Manager at PICS.
- **Integrated UPS shipping**  
"The site's shipping module integrates with the UPS Web site to get up-to-date shipping charges," says Kleinschmidt. "This way, customers can see final prices – including shipping and handling charges – as soon as they order."

*For more information about PICS Online, please contact Don Kleinschmidt at [webmaster@pics.com](mailto:webmaster@pics.com)*





■ **Bottom-Line ROI**  
(continued from page 1)

“Stock-outs happened pretty frequently, so there was a lot of downtime,” says Soule. “They happen much less often now.”

■ **Downtime Reduction**  
**January to March 2006:**  
**73%**

“PICS consultants offer a high degree of expertise and knowledge, but more importantly, they consistently demonstrate a passion for excellence through optimization.” Soule concludes.



*PICS has been implementing MFG/PRO since 1995. Our experience and knowledge is unmatched in the industry and our staff is dedicated and committed to being responsive and available to you when you need us. For information about our implementation services, please contact Terry Putman at [sales@pics.com](mailto:sales@pics.com)*

**Delivering on Expectations** (continued from page 1)

One of those challenges is revamping material flow processes. “We’ll reduce material costs by capturing tighter control of our inventory and cutting stock levels,” he says. Already, during the first phase of the project, Schefenacker has reduced stock levels so significantly that the company has been able to close one warehouse facility.

Soule knows the project will have a positive impact on employees: “Everyone’s excited. It’s bringing a lot of opportunities that weren’t in place before.” And, perhaps most importantly, Schefenacker customers are excited at the prospect of further technological improvements and enhancements: “Our customers know about our initiatives and have already begun offering opportunities based on successful implementation,” he says. “We’re excited about what we’ve done with PICS, and we know we can deliver.”

**Founder’s messages** (continued from page 2)

**(Terry Rossi)**...A few things remain the same, though. Your desire to run a successful business hasn’t lessened – and neither has our drive to help. Rich and I along with the entire PICS team are still as excited as we were 10 years ago to show you how to get the most out of your technology dollars – even if you are still running Novell. As we move into our next decade of providing technology products and services one thing is certain: change is inevitable and we are prepared to help you navigate the waters.

**(Richard Rosenthal)**...his system running smoothly and efficiently. They are all doing really amazing things. We want you to benefit from their knowledge and experience to add more to your bottom line. Again, I would like to thank you for your partnership, and we look forward to another great decade.

**The Total Package** (continued from page 4)

Sangster says he would recommend PICS consulting to another MFG/PRO user looking for better ways to use his or her solution. “The consultants were friendly and knowledgeable, and knew better ways to handle the technology and business processes,” he says. “The engagement more than paid for itself.”

**KIT Industries - A New Face** (continued from page 6)

Since overhauling the site and registering with search engines, web orders at [www.porc-a-fix.net](http://www.porc-a-fix.net) have increased by more than 400 percent. While Dinetz credits much of the increased traffic to search engine optimization – which PICS helped with – he credits the high order-to-hit ratio to the new site’s clean look and easy ordering capabilities. “It’s just so much easier to order now”, he says. “It’s made a huge difference.”

**PICS Newsletter**

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To request a subscription, or to correct a subscription record, please contact Terry Putman at [sales@pics.com](mailto:sales@pics.com)

■ **Submissions**

We welcome articles from readers on how their business are profiting from their PICS solution. Suggestions on how we can improve the content of the newsletter are also welcome. Please send your comments and /or submissions to Meg Jones ([meg@pics.com](mailto:meg@pics.com)), c/o PICS, 46 High Street, Mount Holly, NJ 08060.

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