

Evolution of Akolades

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Evolution of Akolades

Let's talk about Artcraft's order entry system Akolades.

In the 1970s, we had an idea that didn't exist anywhere else: to digitize the ordering process and connect it directly to production.

There was no software available to do this, so we built our own. The result was a full ERP system, beginning with sales order processing and data was entered (show blue screen).

As time went on and the business improved, this system powered production, but orders were still written by hand, mailed or faxed to the factory, and manually entered by the order entry department.

In 1987, fax machines allowed customers to send orders and drawings instantly. By the mid-1990s, email replaced faxing — but orders were still being typed in by hand.

That's when we made a pivotal shift: for the first time, we gave software directly to dealers — allowing them to price jobs themselves and submit orders electronically to the factory.

By the late 1990s, we began directly connecting dealer data to production.

In 2001, Akolades 3.1 introduced a graphical interface, allowing controlled cabinet modifications — a major leap forward at the time.

In 2015, Akolades moved to the web, eliminating software installs and unlocking modern graphics and security.

Through every evolution, the goal has remained the same: integrating design, pricing, and ordering into one seamless process.

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A trip through the trials and advances of Artcraft's quest for an integrated

1978

Artcraft embarks on a project to computerize their production process beginning with Order Entry.

Orders & Drawings: Paper and pencil

Delivery System: Her Majesty's Mail

1980

Introduction of the IBM PC and DOS operating system

1987

Delivery System: Facsimile/Fax machine or Her Majesty's Mail *new!*

1989

Internal Order Entry system adapted to the PC introduces the first (text base) App for dealer quoting and ordering:

AKTS - Artcraft Kitchens Tendering System *new!*

Orders: Computerized listing and price calculation

Drawings: Paper and Pencil

Delivery System: Floppy disk facsimile/fax machine or Her Majesty's Mail *new!*

2001

Common use of the WWW - World Wide Web and the Windows Interface introduces:

Akolades - Artcraft Kitchens Online Automated Data Entry System 1.0, *new!* replaces **AKTS** & connects pricing, ordering,

Orders: Computerized listing and price calculation

Drawings: Paper and Pencil drawings begin being replaced with Autodesk's Autocad 2D allowing improved productivity, accuracy and professionalism

Artcraft became the first custom kitchen manufacturer to integrate quoting, ordering and

manufacturing.

2015 to Present

And so it was for 20 years. But as time went on, the market demand for 3D renderings, with realistic finishes to better visualize the drawings the designers were producing, kept climbing. This led to typical workflows, involving 3 or more different software packages, none of which were integrated with the other. This took an enormous amount of time and was prone to error. Typical examples might include Sketchup or 2020 or Chief Architect for general concept renderings, ACAD 2D for shop drawings, where plans, elevations and sections were all drawn independently, and Artcraft's Akolades for order entry.

But total integration was still missing: the drawings, drawn twice, each in a different CAD package were not integrated into the pricing and ordering software.

Until now...

Akolades 2.0

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