

## When Lives Depend on Data Flow

### *How Ancestry Saw One Hundred-Fold Change in Visibility with APS*



*In life, relationships show our humanity. In business, data shows us direction. No other company has mastered the art of relationships and the science of data better than Ancestry.com.*

Headquartered in Provo, Utah, Ancestry.com is the undisputed source for family histories and vital information, such as military, census, civil, ecclesiastical, and immigration records. Originally called MyFamily.com, Ancestry.com launched two decades ago as a publisher of genealogy products. Today, its enormous popularity as a respected repository of relationship data enables families to research long-hidden histories, share and publish stories, and stay connected to family members throughout the world.

Ancestry.com depends on speed and agility to manage enormous volumes of incoming data on millions of relationships all over the world. Given the volume of incoming data, its ability to schedule data from infinite sources into new projects determines customer satisfaction.

### **No More Spreadsheets**

Like so many companies, Ancestry.com managed planning and scheduling functions with standard Excel spreadsheets. The company's phenomenal growth soon outstripped this outmoded system of scheduling; every minor change to the schedule required manual data entry -- in some instances, to more than hundred projects at a time. Spreadsheets looked like a Rube Goldberg contraption. Ancestry's lone planner feared human error, struggled with long hours and the mounting cost of inefficiency.

That planner, Eric Horne, interviewed more than a dozen production scheduling systems providers. Most did not understand his specialized need for data scheduling, especially the cataloguing of historical data. Some simply laughed and shook their heads: "We schedule production, we don't schedule data." Faced with a growing list of inadequate or unwilling solutions providers, Horne continued his search.

Finally, he found PlanetTogether and began to test a trial version of its advanced planning and scheduling system (APS). Horne quickly saw solutions in Planet's what-if impact analysis, real-time scheduling updates, visual scheduling board, delivery date forecasting and more.

"PlanetTogether listened carefully and offered to create a fully configured version that directly catered to our production scheduling needs," explains Horne.

Integration went smoothly and led to a significant improvement in Ancestry's operations scheduling. "There was an immediate **one hundred-fold change in visibility**," Horne said. "In addition to scanning and indexing documents, we were also able to use Planet's Key Performance Indicators to forecast project completion dates."

Horne now meets daily with internal customers as a unified team. They review scheduled projects and make needed schedule adjustments with ease. Horne claims Planet's technical support team is "phenomenal." *"If I have a question, it's answered within seconds. Planet's staff manages our relationship in a flexible, friendly and knowledgeable way."*

Today, Ancestry.com predicts outcomes based on real and experimental schedules, then confidently compares the impact of changes. The company checks into its global operations throughout the day in real time. "Planet's APS is quickly accessible to plant workers, who can login to the database for monthly work assignments, and to customers, who want to check on the project status," Horne explains.

"Customers enjoy the freedom and ability to go in and do a visual check on our operations. Information is quickly communicated without the bottleneck of the scheduler and all jobs are completely visible." He emphasizes the benefits of smart scheduling enables Ancestry to deliver improved value in service and customers to see a return on initial investment sooner.

When asked if the decision to go with PlanetTogether was a wise one, Horne beams:

***"Absolutely! One hundred percent! It saved my job. What can I say. I've planted my roots in PlanetTogether."***

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### **About PlanetTogether**

PlanetTogether is known for stellar performance in production scheduling for multi-plant manufacturers. Founded in 2004 by Cornell University engineers, this San Diego-based software developer thrives on the challenge of algorithms to drive manufacturing efficiency. Planet's showcase product is the **Galaxy APS production scheduling platform**, whose muscular functionality cuts inventory and labor costs in half, boosts productivity by double digits, and connects multi-plant operations with precision. Fully customizable, *Galaxy* integrates to virtually all ERP systems, typically in four months, and pays for itself in six.