

King Hickory



CUSTOMER STORY

LECTRA®

KING HICKORY
SHORTENS
PRODUCTION
TIME AND
IMPROVES FABRIC
YIELD UP TO 12%
WITH FURNITURE
ON DEMAND.



Using technology to push new boundaries:

Founded in Hickory, North Carolina, in 1958, King Hickory is a family-owned company that manufactures **high-quality, upholstered fabric and leather furniture**. The company is world renowned for its solid frames, master craftsmanship, and 8-way hand-tied construction. With a focus on **creating furniture of the highest standards**, King Hickory has always worked with Lectra to find new ways to produce their merchandise faster with more precision and handle everything from development all the way through to final production.



KING HICKORY

FURNITURE SINCE 1958

The Challenge

The challenge facing King Hickory was how to keep pace with innovations in furniture manufacturing in order to streamline their processes for **faster production** while maintaining the **high-quality standards** that their customers have come to expect. They also wanted to improve craftsmanship and better match tough patterns like chevrons, accelerate order handling while increasing fabric yield, and overall, better manage supply chain costs.

"The challenge for King Hickory was the need to increase our throughput for matched fabrics. The Topspin does a good job but was slower to process and cut as opposed to the Furniture On Demand by Lectra."

John Palmer,
King Hickory President



Finding the Solution

In order to protect their bottom line, create a more automated flow, standardize and maintain excellence along with better managing difficult pattern repeats and matching, King Hickory looked to the Furniture On Demand solution. To answer their objectives, they chose an offer that included the **material library, nesting in the cloud, and a digital production platform**. Also, King Hickory wanted to ensure that the way they produced furniture would be at the highest level with the integration of **the most advanced industry 4.0 technology**.

The Furniture On Demand by Lectra combined with Formaris pattern-making software really helped King Hickory to improve their throughput of matched fabrics. By nesting in the cloud, they were able to **get rid of nesting as a separate task** and **speed up the machine management**, and **accelerate throughput**.

"It is truly night and day from hand cutting to complete and full digital cutting – hands down, it has really accelerated how we process our furniture."

John Palmer,
King Hickory President

An added benefit was the ability to quickly process hard-to-match fabrics like chevrons. **With the Furniture On Demand, they were able to process matched fabrics as quickly as plain fabrics.**



01

TRUSTED TECHNOLOGY PATH AND PARTNER:

With Lectra's expertise and support, King Hickory looked at new ways to re-work their workflow and to digitalize and enhance their process. With the combination of Lectra's most advanced digital solution, Furniture On Demand by Lectra, they were able to **add more precision and excellence to their products.** "Installation of the Furniture On Demand was very seamless" stated Carla Chastain, Lead Lectra CAD Operations.

King Hickory and Lectra's partnership began in 1997 with the use of Lectra cutting, pattern matching, nesting, and product development solutions. Since that time, King Hickory and Lectra have worked collaboratively to find new ways to **push performance and take advantage of digital technologies.**

"To date, all our Lectra software and cutting solutions have met or exceeded our expectations. It has been a great relationship and has worked as discussed and committed. We have purchased other cutting solutions in the past and they did not deliver as they promised and keep our trust as Lectra has," John Palmer, President



"Lectra has taken care of the issues we have had. Transitioning to the Furniture on Demand by Lectra has been a process and is different from our current one but it is worth it and will really help us to deliver high-quality merchandise quickly and keep up with demand."

Carla Chastain,
Lectra CAD Operations



02

ACCELERATING PRODUCTIVITY & STANDARDIZING QUALITY TO CREATE A MORE STREAMLINED PROCESS:

Furniture On Demand's flexibility has helped King Hickory improve its manufacturing processes on multiple levels. It enables them to standardize quality by centralizing processes, therefore, reducing reliance on operator skill level.

"We were looking for more automated efficiency, accuracy, and labor savings. It is really hard to find people and hand cutting is a dying skill. We can no longer get the level of labor that we need to manage our manufacturing efficiently."

Keith Hart,
VP of Sales & Marketing

King Hickory has been able to shorten production time by automating labor-intensive and prone to human-error processes, like **pattern preparation, marker making,** and **cutting execution** to help overcome staffing shortages and free-up available employees to focus on more activities requiring expertise and experience.

03

DIGITAL IMAGING TECHNOLOGY ENHANCES PATTERN MATCHING AND HANDLING:

King Hickory benefits from Lectra's digital imaging technology **to verify and validate fabric patterns on small-scale or complex motifs**, like herringbone, to ensure that all endpoints align together when assembling the final item.

"Without Lectra, we could not offer the level and variety of custom furniture that King Hickory is known for. Lectra's digitalization of our patterns and our production process has really allowed us to have one of the largest selections of custom upholstery in the furniture industry"

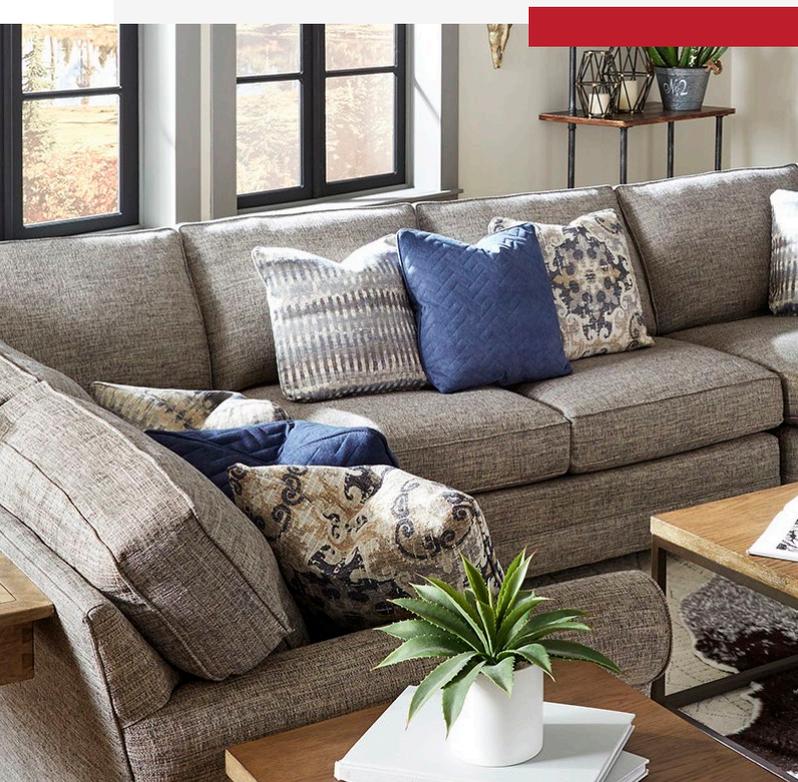
John Palmer,
President



04

ABOUT KING HICKORY

King Hickory Furniture is a family-owned company. They began manufacturing in 1958 in Hickory, North Carolina. For over 50 years, they have proudly provided the **highest grade, upholstered fabric** and **leather furniture** to the consumer.



05

THE KING HICKORY DIFFERENCE

King Hickory has used three major assets in building its reputation over the years, solid frames, master craftsmen, and 8-way hand tied springs. Now, they have further enhanced their top quality design and matching with Lectra's help

Solid Frames

The use of kiln-dried hardwoods with maple rails is the foundation of one of the best frames in the furniture business. Recently, we have incorporated the use of **CAD/CAM technology to create intricate hardwood plywood frames**. This technology allows our designers to create frame shapes that were not possible in the past.

Master Craftsman

King Hickory has been able to attract and keep some of the area's finest craftsmen by offering its employees a work environment that fosters **motivation** and **self-accountability**. Many of these craftsmen have been with the company for more than a quarter of a century.

8 Way Hand Tied Springs

Our seat springing system is **8-way hand-tied**, which is considered the benchmark for seating in all fine upholstery. The finest cushioning materials available are used to **provide excellent comfort**. Fine fabrics and leathers from all over the world are offered in a wide assortment so almost any look can be tailored to the customer's taste and satisfaction.

Top quality design and matching

With the addition of the Lectra Furniture on Demand solution, King Hickory has been able to manage the **highest cut** and **matching quality** in the industry. This adds to the overall design and beauty of each piece.



For fifty years, King Hickory Furniture Company has been dedicated to **building superior furniture, possessing elements of luxury, quality, and style.** We have developed a distinctive collection of timeless upholstered fabric and fine leather furniture to enhance the atmosphere of any setting.

ABOUT

FURNITURE ON DEMAND

by LECTRA

Furniture On Demand by Lectra comprises Lectra's Digital Cutting Platform and single-ply fabric cutting solution Virga. It's a turnkey solution that automates on-demand production right from order reception to cut piece. This disruptive offer gives furniture companies a 360°-view of the entire On-Demand process from small series to one-off production runs.

LEARN MORE →