

# CASE STUDY

# Creative Display Panels Connects with NASA on MFG.com

## CONTACT

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**Frank Tapia**  
President,  
Creative Display Panels



## THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

With more than 20 years of experience in the aviation industry, Creative Display Panels designs and manufactures integrally illuminated panels to rigid military and commercial standards. The shop also offers a wide range of precision machining, heatsink fabrication and plastic injection molding services as well as precision sheet metal parts production to strict customer specifications. Located in Newbury Park, California, the company employs 10 people within its 3,000-square-foot facility.

Creative Display Panels is known for fast turnaround of high-quality products that are competitively priced. However, its president Frank Tapia realized that he was spending too much time searching for customer prospects online. He spent still more time reaching out to these potential customers via email. In spite of his personalized approach, he found that he “was not receiving replies back 98 percent of the time and presumed that companies would not order parts long distance.”

## THE SOLUTION

In June 2017, Frank learned about MFG.com, the world’s largest online manufacturing marketplace that connects buyers and suppliers, from someone he knew locally. He subscribed to MFG.com and set up searches relating to his firm’s service offerings. He soon found himself quoting jobs posted by buyers located well outside his usual business radius. According to Frank, “You need to be very aggressive and competitive if you are going to join MFG.com.” To ensure his competitiveness on the marketplace, he utilized MFG.com’s ShopIQ™ tool, a real-time analysis software application that helps suppliers and manufacturers evaluate their bids against quotes from competitors.

## THE RESULTS

Within two months of joining MFG.com, Creative Display Panels had won eight jobs valued at approximately \$20,000. Notably, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is now a recurring Creative Display Panels customer. Frank notes that, “Before MFG.com we were just machining for companies in the area. But, the good thing about MFG.com is that people can order parts from 3,000 miles away. MFG.com has put me in touch with more shops that want parts machined. That connection is priceless to me.”

Frank explains, “Now that I have MFG.com I don’t use the internet in the same way as before.” He no longer relies on time-consuming emails for job prospecting and is pleased by the high response rate to his MFG.com bids. The resultant increase in shop work now allows Frank to focus more time on business expansion efforts, including the addition of new employees.

Frank plans to better position his firm by acquiring International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 9001 certifications next year. In the manufacturing industry, an ITAR certification is the gold standard for abiding by strict security and compliance regulations. ISO 9001 certifies that an organization meets particular quality management requirements.

Frank concludes, “MFG.com is great for small companies that want to grow and is hands down worth the investment.”