Customer Profile

Wausau Supply cuts costs 30% with Infor Distribution SX.e

Facts at a glance

Product: Infor Distribution SX.e
Industry: Building Materials
Country: USA

"Using leading-edge technology such as Infor Distribution SX.e, we have increased productivity and reduced costs—both by 30%—while offering customers exactly what they want."

—Mike Stelzl, IT Manager, Wausau Supply

About the company

Wausau Supply is a leading distributor of quality name-brand building materials serving authorized retail lumber yards in five states. A privately owned company headquartered in Wausau, Wisconsin, it distributes building materials from 11 distribution centers in 5 states in the Midwest and has 6 light manufacturing plants. Wausau Supply also provides unique value-added services that include a complete line of custom-finished interior and exterior doors, engineered wood products, and custom-finished cement siding. The company's major customers have been small, private lumber yards, as well as a growing number of customers that constitute large buying groups.

Setting the strategy

The primary business challenge that Wausau Supply faced was its ability to provide next-day delivery to not only small lumber yards, which had been its major customer over many years, but also a greater number of conglomerates that were purchasing together. Because the company also began to see more competition from "big box" distribution centers, it required some refocusing of strategy to maintain profitability.

Rather than continue as a traditional distributor offering a few product choices, Wausau Supply decided to change its mission and become a value-added-products distributor providing customized building products and features. Following that decision, the need arose to revise the use of its software. The company was using a product that allocated inventory well and allowed the company to build kits on the fly, but it did not have an up-to-date operating system for back office or logistics operations. With 11 distribution centers differing in size and the type and number of products that are stocked, Wausau Supply needed broad-based visibility into its inventory in every location.

Getting business specific

After evaluating several products, Wausau Supply chose Infor™ Distribution SX.e to meet its needs. According to Mike Stelzl, IT Manager at Wausau Supply, "We had been using Infor Distribution SX.e in conjunction with Total Warehouse Logistics (TWL) on traditional distribution and back office, which worked very well for us. But our goal was to either make them work with our RBC configurator, which we needed for producing custom products, or develop a new back office and logistics program with another vendor to work with the configurator. When all the features and benefits of both options were laid out, there was no comparison. By far our best choice was Infor Distribution SX.e and TWL for back office and logistics, and the RBC configurator—from the standpoint of rich functionality, ease of use, and lower cost."

Seeing results

After Infor Distribution SX.e, TWL, and RBC were implemented within a brief time, Wausau Supply began seeing immediate process improvements. Stelzl explains, "We pride ourselves on next-day delivery for virtually all of our products. Because our 11 locations are not all the same size, they cannot be stocked in the same way.

Infor Distribution SX.e provides the visibility we need into our entire inventory across all locations, enabling us to optimize our selections and maintain the highest level of control."

Infor Distribution SX.e has also helped Wausau Supply adjust to business changes and to continue growing.

According to Stelzl, "As we added new locations over the years, each one had established its own buyers and accounts receivable, accounts payable, and invoicing staffs. Infor Distribution SX.e, however, has enabled us to centralize our buying and consolidate customer service in two areas. These centralized operations have improved our productivity, saved us operating costs and downtime, and enhanced our customer service."

Wausau Supply has also provided Infor with feedback on the features it sought to work with the configurator. Stelzl says Infor continues to augment its solution functionality that caters to specific businesses. He also notes that Infor Distribution SX.e has indirectly enabled Wausau Supply to provide light manufacturing —in six plants—as a valueadded service. "We use the configurator in aggressive ways as we focus on developing more value-added products for our customers—not just doors and shutters, but also engineered wood and several other product lines. Infor has accepted our requests and continues to enhance its Infor Distribution SX.e capabilities to allow us to be more nimble and anticipate the market."

According to Stelzl, Wausau Supply has not been unaffected by economic changes, but the company's switch to becoming a value-added-products distributor has brought more benefits to customers as well as itself. "Like Infor, we're a progressive company, and our two largest locations recently had record months, even in a lagging economy. Providing unique customer choices promises better margins for us, and our customers keep coming back."

With an increased manufacturing presence, Stelzl claims, Wausau Supply has become stronger and its market share continues to expand. "Using leading-edge technology such as Infor Distribution SX.e, we have increased productivity and reduced costs—both by 30%—while offering customers exactly what they want. We believe we are poised for the future, and Infor has helped us considerably in reaching our goals," Stelzl adds.

Doing business better

As Wausau Supply continues to focus on providing custom products and responding quickly to market changes, it looks to Infor for technology support. Says Stelzl, "Wausau Supply and Infor have a mutual understanding. Infor has helped us develop new manufacturing options, and this partnership allows us to getproducts to market faster, substantially increasing our return on investment."

641 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10011
800-260-2640
infor.com

About Infor

Infor is the world's third-largest supplier of enterprise applications and services, helping more than 70,000 large and mid-size companies improve operations and drive growth across numerous industry sectors. To learn more about Infor, please visit www.infor.com.

Copyright© 2012 Infor. All rights reserved. The word and design marks set forth herein are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Infor and/or related affiliates and subsidiaries. All other trademarks listed herein are the property of their respective owners. This document is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute a commitment to you in any way. The information, products and services described herein are subject to change at any time without notice. www.infor.com.

INF1279932-1290359-EN-US-1212-1