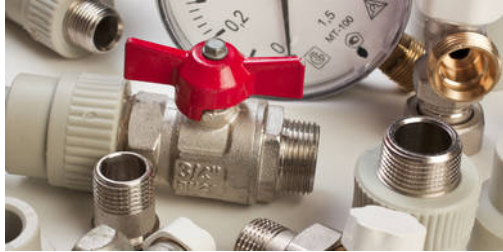




Customer Profile

TMS South fuels growth with Infor Distribution FACTS



Facts at a glance

Product: Infor Distribution FACTS

Industry: Distribution

Country: USA

"Infor Distribution FACTS is a tried and true system that has integrated all the key aspects of our business."

**—Roy Turner, President,
TMS South**

About the company

TMS South is a specialty plumbing repair parts distributor with offices in Taylors, SC; Orlando, FL; and Houston, TX. Specializing in "hard-to-find" items and repair parts, TMS South supplies all types of plumbing products for industrial, commercial, and residential applications from such well-known companies as American Standard™, Kohler, Moen, and Zurn®. TMS South prides itself on building quality working relationships with its customers, "going the extra mile" to ensure customer satisfaction. Customers who need to identify a specific repair part or want guidance with selecting the right products can turn to experienced TMS South customer service representatives for help with resources that include an extensive library of suppliers and an in-plant survey service. TMS South is affiliated with TMS, a group of strategically located maintenance, repair, and operational (MRO) distributors in the United States that have combined their resources to bring unparalleled product knowledge and unbeatable service to its customers.

Setting the strategy

When Roy Turner founded IMSCO, he purchased an off-the-shelf accounting package to manage the company's books. Within a few years, Turner wanted affordable, highly functional software specifically designed to benefit the distribution industry to help IMSCO going forward.

Following a thorough search, IMSCO selected Infor™ Distribution FACTS. From accounting and sales to the warehouse and everywhere in between, the application was designed to help distributors like IMSCO enhance customer service, optimize inventory levels, increase productivity, and improve profitability.

Infor Distribution FACTS proved to be a wise choice, providing a solid platform that supported IMSCO's steady growth from an initial base of 4 users to 16 users within less than 10 years.

A key reason that IMSCO chose Infor Distribution FACTS was its adherence to the inventory management principles of distribution industry guru Gordon Graham to enable growth and development. With inventory information made available across the organization in real time, IMSCO progressed well beyond using min/max reordering formulas.

The company began using the Graham features of Infor Distribution FACTS to make purchasing decisions in which lead times, safety stock days, sales histories, and vendor review days were factored into the equation.

Featuring flags and other controls to account for unusual circumstances and to allow for the human override of suggested purchase orders, Infor Distribution FACTS equipped IMSCO's managers with sophisticated software tools needed to minimize their inventory investment and maximize service to customers.

IMSCO soon established a solid reputation for servicing its customers' needs. However, the distribution industry was changing. IMSCO's profitability was under threat from larger national competitors with massive purchasing power.

As Turner assessed the competitive environment, he believed that a solution might lie in cooperating with similar small distributors to create a regional distribution powerhouse focused on the specialty plumbing distribution market.

Getting business specific

To be certain that the right technology was in place, Turner contacted several leading distribution software vendors, which suggested many Infor software options, including an Infor Distribution FACTS upgrade and a web-based solution that would enable all member companies to closely coordinate the group's buying decisions.

Turner and two other distributors met and agreed to form TMS South. The three business owners agreed that upgrading Infor Distribution FACTS to the current version would provide the dual benefits of a proven distribution industry solution while allowing TMS South to share a computing platform.

In addition to Infor Distribution FACTS, TMS South chose a comprehensive professional services package from Earnest & Associates (E&A). E&A, an Infor business partner, was instrumental in providing all necessary components for successful implementation of Infor Distribution FACTS at each location.

Seeing results

The new system was successfully launched in a short time. A part-number interchange developed by implementation staff helped TMS South gain companywide visibility into its inventory files and allowed its local salespeople to continue using the same part numbers they were using before the merger.

Over 60 computer users became active at all three locations on the same day. "When implementation began, we never skipped a beat," says Turner, president, TMS South, "and the first orders for TMS South were booked that day without any major interruptions."

The Infor Distribution FACTS system has empowered TMS South to begin leveraging its resources in new ways to improve its efficiency.

Quotes are now formatted using UnForm and delivered using Infor Distribution FACTS Email or FaxLink, thus saving the time and effort of printing documents onto forms while significantly reducing postage and related expenses.

The Infor Distribution FACTS Archive module has enabled the corporate office to close its month-end accounting records in mere minutes, while enterprise-wide access to information has enabled the payables and collections processes to be managed by experienced resources located at the Orlando branch.

The user-friendly sales order interface grants end-users quick access to customer account information and inventory quantities at each warehouse, improving the speed and quality of its customer interactions.

These are just a few examples of how Infor Distribution FACTS has helped TMS South emerge almost overnight as the leading specialty plumbing distribution player in the Southeastern United States.

Doing business better

TMS South continues to push forward with technology. The TMS South catalog has been imported into the Infor Distribution FACTS eCommerce Storefront module with plans to enable online sales in the near future.

As TMS South explores how technology can help its business grow, Turner claims he will continue to leverage the Infor Distribution FACTS system to the fullest. “Why would we go to another product?” asked Turner. “Infor Distribution FACTS is a tried and true system that has integrated all the key aspects of our business, and E&A has the resources to help make it all work together for us.”

About Earnest & Associates Inc.

Earnest & Associates Inc. (E&A) is a professional services firm dedicated to helping companies increase their productivity and profitability by implementing information technology. For more information, visit www.earnestassoc.com.



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