



## Anthony Forest Products Company

### Company Facts

- Location: El Dorado, Arkansas
- Industry: Integrated Producer of SYP, Glulam, I-Joist and Chips
- Number of Locations: 7
- Web site: [www.anthonyforest.com](http://www.anthonyforest.com)



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Chantle Selman, Controller | Anthony Forest Products

Anthony Forest Products Company is an integrated forest products company operating a Southern Yellow Pine sawmill, two engineered wood laminating plants, two wood chip mills and an I-joist plant through a Canadian joint venture. In 2010, all of Anthony Forest Product’s operations started using LumberTrack business software to consolidate data, streamline and optimize operations at all locations, and allow collaboration for high customer responsiveness and profitability.

### Visibility and Accuracy Provides Business Insight

With unprecedented inventory visibility and accuracy, Anthony Forest Products now has real-time inventory, cost and order data company-wide. Day-to-day, real-time data allows managers to improve responsiveness and optimize production scheduling for peak profitability, highest customer service levels and on-time order fulfillment.

### Financials to Board, Managers in Three Days

Chantle Selman, Anthony Forest Products’ Controller, says the best part of the LumberTrack/MS Dynamics GP system is the visibility and accessibility of information that makes it easy to find and report on the financials of each location. “Every

### Success Highlights

#### Solution

- LumberTrack™

#### Benefits

- Easy consolidated and divisional financial reporting
- Month-end reports in three days instead of 10 days
- Dramatically improved company-wide inventory visibility and accuracy
- Informed, engaged managers
- 75% reduction in time to take physical inventory counts
- 80% faster production planning, saving 6-8 hours/week
- Faster inventory turnover from ability to pre-sell production
- Less stale and damaged inventory from tag aging
- Streamlined administrative tasks allowing for personnel redeployment
- Capital spending tracking
- Easier year-end audit

month, I run a P&L report and balance sheet for each location. There are fewer errors and less to reconcile. Management and the Board really likes that they get reports three or four days after month-end, instead of a couple of weeks into the month when it's often too late to take any action."

Easy access to accurate data is due to the seamless integration of LumberTrack at their sales and manufacturing locations, FiberTrack in the log yard, and MS Dynamics GP (Great Plains) at head office. Tagging stations throughout the plants track tagged raw materials, WIP and finished product, feeding that information into LumberTrack. Each location uses LumberTrack to manage sales orders, work orders and shipping/logistics. Cost and transactional data uploads seamlessly into MS Dynamics GP for accounting and financial management.

"It's all integrated, and we can look at the data all rolled up, or drill down to each location," says Selman. "The drill down is phenomenal. For example, we can look at our sawmill and see the cost cycle from log, to rough green, to rough dry and finished. We couldn't do that before."

Ronnie Clay, VP Finance, agrees that LumberTrack and MS Dynamics GP have made cost control and financial reporting easier. In addition, he says that sharing information company-wide also helps each location operate more efficiently. "We've been able to go from a close period of between 10 days and two weeks down to about three days. Our users have access to information, dashboards and metrics faster," says Clay. "This allows our managers to make improvements, look at costs and control them using accurate data."

### Inventory Visibility Enables Pre-Selling

"Tagging our inventory at various stages of production has given us visibility we didn't have before, and the opportunity to speed inventory turnover," says Clay. "Being able to predict what we will have available for sale in our manufacturing process has helped us sell inventory faster. If our sales professionals know that 100,000

board-feet of 2x10s is going into the dry kiln tomorrow, we can call our customer and commit to a price before it's even ready."

"Inventory information is much more reliable," Clay continues. "When you commit to an order, you know the product is available to fill it. Our sales professionals can see when the product ships, and to which customer locations. It's all there for our people to see."

### Production Scheduling Optimized

Derek Ratchford, General Manager of Anthony's Engineered Wood Products (EWP) division, describes how better visibility of inventory and order data for all manufacturing locations helps him optimize production. "I can see things I could never see before. I have a quick snapshot of my lam stock, graded material, and my total glulam product on the ground to help manage inventory better."

"Then, for example, if we have orders for 2x6, I can go into our sawmill's inventory and see how much 2x6 rough dry and lam stock they have," Ratchford continues.

"Before, we were operating in the dark," Ratchford recalls. "If you wanted this kind of information, you'd call and they'd walk out into the yard and count units. The conversations used to be questions. Now I can get all the answers I need with a click in the LumberTrack system."

"We used to spend eight or 10 hours a week putting production schedules together," Ratchford recalls, noting that with approximately 48,000 SKUs it was not always the most optimized production schedule. He describes a report developed for LumberTrack that takes all orders on hand, breaks them down by week, and generates a weekly production schedule. "We take an hour or so to make a few adjustments to maximize our productivity. We shaved off a lot of time every week that somebody can spend doing something else."

**"Tagging our inventory at various stages of production has given us visibility we didn't have before, and the opportunity to sell faster and speed inventory turnover. Inventory information is much more reliable, and we use it to optimize production schedules."**

Ronnie Clay, VP Finance

“We can break down our inventory in different ways – looking at inventory, say, by balanced and unbalanced layup. And we have less dead inventory too.” Ratchford explains: “We’re tracking tag aging, broken down by 30, 60, 90, 120, 160, and 190 days. When glutam sits, there’s an opportunity for water damage. So our goal is to ship the oldest first. We can look for a specific tag number, and we put tag numbers on the order to trace back if there’s a customer service issue.”

### Inventory Counts Four Times Faster

With tagging and better inventory control, Anthony Forest Products has dramatically reduced the amount of time spent on physical inventory counts and inventory reconciliation. “It used to take us eight to 10 hours for three or four people to count inventory every month,” Ratchford recalls. “And it was never completely accurate.”

“Now, it takes one quarter of the time,” says Ratchford. “We do the inventory with handheld barcode scanners. LumberTrack tells you what you’re supposed to have, and if there’s a variance, it narrows down the area you have to check for tags so it’s much easier to reconcile any differences. It’s very quick, very accurate.”

“Inventory was always our biggest issue at month end,” Selman recalls. “Now it’s so accurate that we don’t even physically count every month. LumberTrack doesn’t allow you to make mistakes. It points out the error before it gets into MS Dynamics GP.”

### More Time Savings Allow Redeployment

LumberTrack and MS Dynamics make light work of many more tasks that used to be time consuming, freeing up resources to redeploy onto other tasks.

Clay describes the LumberTrack report created to calculate production-based SLMA association dues. “What used to involve three or four people at various locations, delays waiting for reports, and several hours to compile and calculate is now done

automatically. The next day after month-end, the report with the SLMA dues calculation is there in a file. It’s just one small example of the time-saving processes we have implemented.”

“We also no longer print, send or email financial statements to our Leadership Team, which is made up of the officers and managers of the company. They simply log onto Report Viewer to see the reports,” Clay continues. “From there, they can print the statements or download them to Excel for further analysis.”

“The system has made people’s work easier,” says Selman. “Someone who used to help out in accounting and sales was sent over to help with Project Management during our sawmill expansion. We wouldn’t have been able to do without her before.”

### Professional Services Add Systemic Value

LumberTrack’s implementation and support people have been instrumental in helping Anthony Forest Products set up the integrated system for the greatest advantage and to provide the business information they need to compete and optimize operations.

“From the way we set up our machine centers for tagging, to the way we structure our financial reporting systems and pull information from both LumberTrack and GP, they were involved in all of that,” says Clay. “They came in, saw what we were doing and listened to what we wanted to accomplish...and told us where we needed to put tagging stations and record costs to be able to do that.”

“The services have been fantastic,” says Selman. “The turnaround, the people. They’re all very nice, very professional, and they know what they’re talking about.”

“Our company-wide cost accounting is much easier with the report the services folks set up. It’s a complicated report, but it’s very user friendly. The location managers understand it. I can make changes as I need, add an account or a cost center,” she continues.

**“LumberTrack has people more engaged in looking for solutions and opportunities, because the data in it is reliable and consistent. Before, we were operating in the dark. Conversations used to be questions. Now I can get all the answers I need with a click in the LumberTrack system.”**

Derek Ratchford, General Manager of Engineered Wood Products Division

“Our users have access to information, dashboards and metrics faster. This allows our managers to make improvements, look at costs and control them using accurate data.”

Ronnie Clay, VP Finance

“It has a lot of checks and balances, so finding errors is easier. It helps me a lot.”

“We’re also using the system to manage the spending in our capital project,” adds Selman, referring to the \$25 million expansion of their sawmill. “There are lots of account numbers for that project, with all the depreciation accounts. All the POs get assigned to a project, and brought onto the schedule. It used to take hours of manual entry, and now it’s done seamlessly...depreciation and all.”

“We just completed our annual financial audit, and the auditors were very complementary about the project accounting,” says Selman. “In fact, the entire audit was easier because we knew where to go to find the information they were looking for.”

## People Engaged for Bright Future

Anthony Forest Products is enthusiastic about the future.

“LumberTrack has people more engaged. The data in it is reliable and consistent. We’ve gotten rid of monthly inventory fluctuations,” says Ratchford. “LumberTrack is easier to follow. Everything is just a click away from figuring out.”

“We continue to expand our usage of the system to take advantage of its capabilities and benefits,” says Clay. “Capabilities such as document imaging, workflow management, parts inventory tracking, budgeting and forecasting. And we’re looking forward to V10.”

## About Epicor

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COVER IMAGES: Top - Derek Ratchford; Middle - Chantle Selman (L) and Ronnie Clay (R)



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