



Arizona Correctional Industries

Migrating from a legacy system to an integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution based on True SOA™, improving systems security and business unit oversight at eight different (ADC) facilities

Company Facts

- Location: Phoenix, AZ
- Industry: Correctional – manufacturing and services companies incorporated into Arizona prison system.
- Employees: 4,000

“Multi-plant access has been a fabulous time-saver. We have approximately 82 employees using the system, with as many as 40 at one time. Providing uniform processes creates less confusion, issues and error. ”

Kent Rooen, IT Specialist III | Arizona Correctional Industries

Success Highlights

Challenges and Opportunities

- Migrating from a legacy system to an integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution based on True SOA™, improving systems security and business unit oversight at eight different Arizona Department of Corrections (ADC) facilities

Epicor Solution and Services

- Epicor Manufacturing

Benefits

- Migrated from independent, standalone systems to a modern, connected ERP platform with robust manufacturing and central office capabilities
- Multi-site access provides uniform processes and data along with increased visibility across departments, businesses and locations
- Enhanced security features ensure control over inventory and inmate-executed processes

Federal and state correctional departments are constantly striving to improve prisoner recidivism, rehabilitation and society re-entry rates. These issues lie at the core of correctional institutions' effectiveness and efficiency. Progressive outlooks on the prison system include an understanding that rehabilitation in place of retribution is most effective in enabling inmates to re-enter society and avoid a return to the prison system.

Arizona has remained consistently ahead of the national recidivism curve, undertaking some of the most progressive programs incenting prisoner education, job training and rehabilitation. Getting Ready: Keeping Communities Safe, an award-winning program implemented in 2004, facilitates inmate reentry into society by structuring the prison environment like the outside world. Arizona's initiative empowers inmates to take control of their own lives, shifting pre-release preparation from staff to inmates with graduated incentives and privileges to reward good behavior. Inmates taking part in the program are encouraged to earn high school equivalency diplomas, achieve and maintain sobriety, work full time, and participate in victim-focused volunteer activities during leisure time.

Arizona Correctional Industries (ACI) is an integrated group of businesses providing one of the main components of the state's Getting Ready initiative. One of the primary aspects of the program is the availability of job-training through real, on-site employment opportunities. As such, job training and employment behind bars are aligned with actual Arizona industries. Providing fully fledged manufacturing of consumer goods, institutional products and furniture, as well as professional services like graphic design and press printing, ACI creates the demand required to train inmates in marketable, real-world skills. Manufacturing products ranging from signs and license plates to outdoor furniture, indoor furniture, bedding, upholstery, boxes and plastic bags, ACI is the foundation for a program that has saved Arizona taxpayers an estimated \$1.6 million since its introduction.

Migration to Modern Technology Set

As ACI continues to grow, gaining traction in light of stellar results, the company sought to integrate each of their locations, industries and verticals onto a single ERP solution. An Epicor platform provided ACI with real-time, connected ERP providing enhanced visibility, control and features across each business unit. In addition to improved core manufacturing capabilities, ACI's change enabled multi-plant connectivity and enhancements to invoicing, inventory, overall efficiency and most importantly – security.

"We had outgrown our previous solution, if we looked at ERP as a ruler, we were using about two of 12 inches," explained Kent Rooen, IT specialist III with ACI. After years of running standalone, insufficient systems, a migration provided the connectivity and multi-site capabilities required at ACI.

Time Saved with Secure Multi-Site Access

"Each different prison has at least one job site," Rooen continued. "In total, we have over eight facilities online with 15 job shops – and ACI is always in direct communication with the Arizona Department of Corrections."

Given the complexity of ACI's environment, real-time multi-site access was a serious focal point in the Epicor upgrade. "Multi-plant access has been a fabulous time-saver. We have approximately 82 employees using the system, with as many as 40 at one time. Providing uniform processes creates less confusion, issues and error."

Enhancements for the Present, Future

One major area of improvement is invoice disputes. "After delivery, a signed packing slip needs to be returned. In the past, we manually cross-referenced packing slips with invoices," said Rooen. "Now, the system keeps everything together, the signed packing slip is scanned and attached to the final invoice, along with the purchase order."

In the future, Rooen anticipates taking further strides enhancing the company's technology. Epicor's e-business suite provides an opportunity to further connect the company's sites, suppliers and customers. Business Intelligence will also provide increased analytical capabilities supporting ACI's diverse product offerings.

"We haven't taken advantage of e-business just yet," said Rooen. "We're moving toward using Epicor Service Connect and Epicor Portal so that sales representatives can integrate CRM with Microsoft Office 2007 in the field, or so customers can use a Web browser to view or pay invoices."

Regardless of the many enhancements to ACI's ERP platform, one area remains key given ACI's unique work environment – security.

Security the Utmost Concern

Because ACI's job shops, equipment, inventory, computer systems and customers are handled by inmates, keeping business steady in the hands of inmates is no simple task. Overall, incidents remain minimal, with work providing a constructive avenue for inmates' time. Nevertheless, an ERP solution with abundant security features and user-controls is a necessity.



“We need the ability to lockdown user rights to a very strict set of capabilities,” said Rooen “Epicor’s process security is very robust. We can lock people in and out, provide unique backgrounds to each job site and maintain control over access rights.”

Physical inventory is also an important concern. Twice a year we do a complete physical inventory. Scanning material into the system makes it much easier,” stated Rooen. “Overall, the security controls are very effective. We even have inmates running crystal reports and managing payroll.”

Awarded for ingenuity, tax-dollar efficiency

Arizona’s Department of Corrections was recently awarded an Innovations in American Government award by Harvard University’s Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation. Accompanying the honor was a \$100,000 endowment toward dissemination and replication across the country.

ADC’s unique and innovative approach to inmate rehabilitation has garnered compelling results representative of a successful taxpayer-funded initiative. Prior to Getting Ready, almost half (42%) of Arizona’s released inmates returned to prison within three years. Despite a 17% increase in prison population, graduates of Getting Ready are 35% more successful in the community than inmates of comparable risk. In addition to improved recidivism, inmate-on-inmate violence is down by 37%, inmate-on-staff assaults by 51%, and inmate suicides by 33%. Over 75% of the inmate population has completed a GED along with job training while collectively donating over one million dollars to Arizona crime victim organizations. Overall, Getting Ready has saved Arizona an estimated \$1.6 million in direct reductions in ADC spending.

About Epicor

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