



H.J. Oldenkamp Company

Company Facts

- Location: Warren, Michigan
- Industry: Distribution
- Number of Employees: 35
- Web site: www.oldenkamp.com

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Jeff Jensen, Operations Manager | H.J. Oldenkamp

Success Highlights

Challenges

- Help a Michigan-based distributor of specialty building products reduce costs, increase customer service, and improve inter-company communications

Solution

- Epicor Prophet 21

Benefits

- Improved customer service
- Reduced operational costs
- Streamlined corporate communications

Less than a year after going live on Epicor® Prophet 21®, Jeff Jensen, operations manager at H.J. Oldenkamp Company, noticed a surprising—and substantial—decrease in what his company spent on paper and related paperwork. “There are costs associated with every piece of paper a company generates,” he says. “With Prophet 21, we eliminated many of those costs because we now keep most of our information online.”

H.J. Oldenkamp, a distributor of specialty building products—and Michigan’s sole distributor of DuPont Corian—moved to Prophet 21 after more than a decade of existing on software that didn’t suit the company. “It was never a fully-designed system,” Jensen says. “There was no general ledger functionality; you could take orders, pay bills, and that was about the extent of it.” He adds that keeping track of inventory was unreliable, and, at best, “iffy.” Jensen says that the unreliable software system affected every person in the 50-employee company negatively—especially back-office staff and customer service representatives. “The holes in the system, unfortunately, became a way of life,” he says. “Our people became callous to them.”

Adjusting to Reliability

Now, he says, H.J. Oldenkamp employees are still adjusting to the fact that they can trust the numbers and figures that Prophet 21 provides. “We have so many capabilities now. Before, we could never look up critical information in a timely manner. For example, to verify commitment of a product to fill a customer order, we would have to wait for the system to search back through every order and

report,” Jensen says “Now, it’s a button-click away. We can make a decision with the information, without delaying the order transaction or the customer.”

Order processing at the company has also become much more efficient, he says. “The value this has provided our customer service department is key,” Jensen charges. “Prophet 21 gives our customer service representatives the information they need, right at their fingertips.”

Service representatives have also been able to help customers in a shorter time than ever before, Jensen says. “We’re still getting the same product to them at the same price; we’re just able to process their information quicker and more efficiently,” he says. Have customers noticed? “They certainly notice that the paperwork is different, and that there’s less of it,” he says.

Better Communications

Most improved is inter-company communications, contends Jensen. “The ability to share information between departments, to know that an order has been placed, billed, and shipped—without having to chase it down—has saved us time and money,” he says. “The accounting people no longer have to run around the office,

asking each other what bill has been paid and what bill hasn’t. The information is all right on the screen.”

Ultimately, Prophet 21 will provide H.J. Oldenkamp the tools it needs for growth. Jensen contends that cutting staff was never an intention when the company invested in the solution. Instead, he says, if the solution creates less work for one department, “There’s always somewhere else that person could be reassigned to—like the sales department.”

About Epicor

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