

Mailender uses VAI software to strategically streamline inventory management.



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Situation

Customer Profile

Mailender is a privately held distributor of janitorial, health care, safety and food service supply products based out of Hamilton, Ohio. Founded in 1936, Mailender serves Property Management companies, Contract Service Cleaners, Foodservice providers, Industrial Manufacturers, Long Term Healthcare Facilities, and School Systems.

Problem

Context

Mailender was struggling with its inventory management – as a regional distributor, inventory was dispersed throughout various locations. As a result, time management issues became a concern, as siloed departments struggled to properly manage and track inventory levels and information was passed along through word-of-mouth, rather than through a consolidated, streamlined warehouse management system. Warehouse staff spent hours tracking orders and stocking and counting inventory, a process that became increasingly inefficient and ineffective, particularly when it came time to enter inventory data into the company's ERP system, which was done manually.

Another obstacle was the paper-based systems for processes such as transfers and vendor returns, which was labor intensive and subject to human error. In addition, it became difficult to track order status through the system as the technology was not built to manage the selecting, pulling and loading of inventory. All the while, the posting of sales and receipts of inventory was constantly delayed, thereby greatly hindering Mailender's ability to achieve business objectives.

Solution Overview

Technical Components

- VAI S2K Warehouse

Third Party Tools

- IBM Power™ Systems

Benefits

- VAI's ERP integrates with the IBM Power™ Systems platform.
- Inventory management processes become streamlined.

Objectives

The challenge was to employ a system that effectively streamlines inventory management processes to improve time management, productivity, and help to better achieve business goals.

Finding the Right Partner

Mailender was happy with its current legacy system and didn't want to abandon what they already had built internally. However, they needed a Warehouse Management solution that would enhance performance by streamlining shipping processes, identify areas for improvement and facilitate transitional data between systems.

To select the right technology solution to integrate into its legacy system and help improve these warehouse operational efficiencies, Mailender utilized a partnership with PCMS Datafit in Cincinnati, Ohio to identify the best vendor for its needs. The field of options was quickly narrowed after recognizing VAI's ability to integrate its Warehouse Management solution with Mailender's ERP system on the IBM Power™ Systems platform.

Solution

Process

After an extensive vetting process, Mailender selected VAI's S2K Warehouse Management Software, which automates the inventory process, ensuring all operations throughout the warehouse management process are integrated. Because it offers real-time enterprise integration, the S2K Warehouse Management Software concentrates on productivity as a key business driver, optimizing operational efficiencies and cutting costs.

Using the Solution to Solve the Problem

VAI's S2K Warehouse Management Software streamlines the warehouse management processes – Mailender's physical inventory is easily tracked, thereby providing a controlled and accurate inventory system, and departments can access and share information, facilitating the ability to better see and recount variances throughout the day.

Evaluation

Results and Benefits

In terms of effectively utilizing labor hours, Mailender's warehouse management team can now identify a product at any point throughout the order process and have clear paths of responsibility for order accuracy for each step. The physical inventory process has been drastically reduced, significantly cutting down on the hours spent on identifying and re-counting physical inventory prior to count completion. Product is located within minutes, negating the issue of manual discrepancies.

In addition, purchasing is more accurate, payables mistakes are reduced and, because inventory movement is now tracked and recorded at an increased rate, sales are posted in a timely fashion, all of which result in improving cash flow to the business. This was accomplished through the use of triggers on the database files for any action applied to various master files.

Rick Amato, Project Manager, VAI states, "We knew Mailender didn't need an overhaul of its entire legacy system – it wanted an effective warehouse management tool that would integrate easily with what was already in place but would have significant impact on operational efficiencies and the bottom line. Our S2K Warehouse Management Software was the obvious choice for them, and because Mailender was implementing it as a standalone solution, the impact across all departments was felt almost immediately. We are currently exploring other ways in which VAI can help Mailender grow its business and improve its operational processes."

Customer Quote

Chris Ward, Vice President, Mailender states, "While the operational inefficiencies in our warehouse management processes never affected our customers, it was putting a huge strain on our internal resources. To ensure future growth for our organization and continue to provide the level of world-class service our customers have come to expect, we needed a standalone warehouse management technology that would easily integrate with our current legacy system and automate the inventory process. VAI really took the time to understand our business, and after analyzing our goals and challenges we agreed the S2K Warehouse Management software would be the best fit for our needs."

For More Information

For more information about VAI products and services, call the VAI at [telephone number]

To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: <http://www.vai.net>

For more information, call [contact person] at 1.800.824.7776 or email us at sales@vai.net

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