

BERJE INC.

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

Manufacturers daily face the challenge of monitoring inventory levels accurately. The need for precision increases when the manufacturing process entails mixing ingredients, especially liquids such as chemicals.

Not only must the firm possess accurate inventory readings at all times, but also precise storage location information. To handle this logistical dilemma, a real-time inventory management solution is essential. Berjé Inc. faced this exact predicament.

Customer Profile

Berjé Inc. is a New Jersey-based global distributor of essential oils and aromatic chemicals to the flavour, fragrance, pharmaceutical and allied trades. The company maintains thousands of pieces of inventory and distributes its products from facilities in Bloomfield, New Jersey, Los Angeles and Chicago. Berjé is an integral part of the supply chain for several multi-national corporations in the field of essential oil supply.

Problem

Berjé recently implemented an enterprise resource planning (ERP) warehouse management solution (WMS) to track inventory levels and locations accurately. The company partnered with VAI (Vormittag Associates, Inc.) to develop this intricate solution.

Several non-negotiable requirements complicated Berjé's search for a WMS package. The company sought an application capable of full integration with its current manufacturing and distribution systems. Concurrently, Berjé needed a foolproof means of ensuring timely and accurate product shipments. "Accuracy is important from a customer relations perspective," said Ajay Sanghvi, Berjé's Vice President of Operations. "However, it is mandatory when dealing with any type of chemical. We must know both the amount and location of all substances on hand at all times."

Product movement further

complicated the firm's search for a solution. At Berjé, products continually move around a two-story facility that warehouses scores of containers at any given time. Inventory, which is stored in the stockroom, must be conveyed to a centralized pouring station where ingredients are mixed to customer specifications and then returned to their original stockroom locale.

Objectives

It is critical to know, in real time, exactly where a product is located within the warehouse. It is also crucial to have a precise measure of how much inventory remains on hand in each barrel. Berjé had relied on a paper ticket model to track these requirements for years and now needed an automated solution that afforded greater precision.

Thus, Berjé's unique business needs added a level of complexity not solvable by off-the-shelf, conventional solutions.

The logo for Berjé Inc. features the word "BERJÉ" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered within a dark purple rectangular background.

Finding the Right Partner

Berjé's search led it directly to VAI. Berjé and VAI had previously partnered in 1997 to install an ERP application to replace Berjé's existing home-grown, piecemeal software solutions. VAI customized and installed its S2K for Distribution package for Berjé after evaluating all the firm's enterprise management needs. Since that time, VAI had helped keep Berjé current with changing manufacturing, distribution and marketing conditions by incorporating new customized features into upgraded versions of its S2K.

"We faced a tall order when searching for WMS packages," said Berjé's Sanghvi, "but from our experience with VAI we knew we had to look no further. VAI had the capacity to design a cost-effective, customized solution that integrated fully with our existing ERP capabilities with minimum modification. We knew the VAI system would deliver superior performance because of their staff's commitment to fully understanding how Berjé's processes operate."

Solution

In May 2005, Berjé chose VAI's S2K for WMS with ticket processing because it allowed

the company to achieve all its objectives in one comprehensive solution. VAI's software provides both accurate inventory counts and real-time inventory locale information. In lieu of paper tickets, Berjé personnel merely scan each container, which instantaneously commits the specific amount of product used and records the transaction for inventory control purposes. This entire process is accomplished via one keystroke because the system tracks the contents of every container in inventory and all the transactions that occur to that container individually. Illustrative transactions include combining like product with different lot numbers, consuming material to fulfil a production order or simply moving the product from one location to another.

The cost was minimal to design and only required six months to implement due to the VAI team's in-depth knowledge of the existing applications in use at Berje. According to VAI Manufacturing Segment Manager Pete Zimmerman, "The solution incorporates a checks-and-balances system to ensure that all shipments are accurately processed. This capability streamlines Berjé's delivery process and improves

the company's inventory control immeasurably. WMS does this via order manager, which allows warehouse management personnel to select the customer order to pick and the specific container to use by unique identifier, thus minimizing errors and maximizing accuracy."

The WMS upgrade seamlessly integrated with the company's existing S2K for Manufacturing package.

Using the Solution to Solve the Problem

The WMS implementation has yielded the desired improvements in inventory control and customer order fulfillment. Inventory accuracy now approaches a precision level of greater than 99%, enabling Berjé to keep inventory at optimum levels without incurring the expenses associated with carrying unnecessary amounts in stock.

Evaluation- Results and Benefits

Relative to customer orders, Berjé can now track every transaction in detail and, by sales order, identify the precise container from which the order was fulfilled. The availability of such detailed information enhances quality control and facilitates

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compliance with regulations governing accountability for chemicals. Deliveries are more accurate and timely as well. In fact, virtually every aspect of Berjé's business has benefited from the implementation including accounting, production, warehousing, distribution and manufacturing.

Customer Quote

According to Berjé's Sanghvi, "This implementation gave us the back-end capabilities we needed to enhance our customer service capabilities. Notably, employee efficiency and productivity—essential elements of customer service—have improved as well. With VAI's expert support,

the WMS upgrade has been a smooth, uncomplicated experience delivered on time and within budget. VAI's S2K for WMS continues to reap unforeseen corporate benefits across every dimension."

BERJÉ

