

NexTec Crafts A Quality Solution For Waddell Manufacturing



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Dan Stojadinovic,
IT Manager

For over 125 years, Waddell Manufacturing has been producing quality wood products. Over the years its products have evolved from custom millwork to its current line of shelving, furniture legs, dowels, and mouldings. Waddell products, favorites of do-it-yourselfers, are found in home centers, hardware stores, craft retailers and distributors worldwide. The company headquarters in Stow, Ohio employs 35 people.

System Mismatch

When general manager Kyle Kibler came on board three years ago, Waddell had recently implemented a new business management solution. It had been highly customized in an attempt to meet the manufacturing and distribution needs of the company. However, employees struggled with the system setup, and management wasn't able to get the data needed to make basic business decisions. Vital functions like the ability to quickly determine on-hand quantities necessitated several steps. It was clear that the system as it had been implemented wasn't meeting the company's strategic needs—something needed to change.

Kibler and his IT manager, Dan Stojadinovic, set out to evaluate the system in place, and compare it to three other leading manufacturing and distribution solutions on the market. Their goal was to find a user-friendly, yet powerful solution that adequately addressed both the distribution and manufacturing facets of the company.

Blueprint For Success

NexTec Group proposed the winning solution. Both Kibler and Stojadinovic praise NexTec Group

for the comprehensive approach they took to resolving Waddell's business problems. More than a scripted software demonstration, “Their presentation targeted our unique business needs, and showed us how their solution could address these needs,” recalls Kibler.

NexTec Group followed up with a detailed implementation plan. The plan identified the members involved in each step of the project and clarified their project tasks. It



Waddell now has the accurate inventory information they need to make informed business decisions.

also detailed the reporting process, installation, testing, and staff training. Kibler refers to the document as a blueprint outlining the current situation, the ultimate goals, and the processes required to reach those goals. “It was obvious that NexTec really understood our business; they

offered solid input and suggestions for improvement.”

During the implementation phase, NexTec Group's consultants encouraged Waddell to use the opportunity to rethink and potentially restructure aspects of the business that weren't optimal. “NexTec offered significant guidance throughout the implementation,” says Kibler.

Forecasting Solution

Kibler, Stojadinovic, and NexTec Group worked closely to develop an impressive forecasting model. This team effort included several collaborative meetings, and execution by all parties involved. As Waddell's success relies on having the products ready to ship when customers need them, it was imperative that Waddell have accurate forecasting models. “Customers expect a two-day turn around.

It was up to us to have a forecasting model that would ensure we are never out of stock,” says Kibler.

NexTec Group worked closely with a consultant in inventory management practices hired by Waddell, taking the recommendations from the consultant and turning them into a practical solution. “NexTec developed an effective, yet relatively inexpensive solution for a complex problem,” says Stojadinovic, “They proved they are flexible thinkers, not tied to the box.” Kibler agrees, “NexTec did an outstanding job of providing a solution for us.”

NexTec Group set up an alerting function that automatically sends an email to the inventory control manager when demand exceeds the forecasts for a specified period of time. Kibler credits this early warning system with giving Waddell time to react in order to keep fill rates high—and customers returning.

Total Inventory Visibility

Waddell’s customers have precise packaging demands. For example, table legs must be individually wrapped and labeled, and packaged inside a larger labeled box. In Waddell’s old system, the staff was unable to determine what state the inventory was in. They could see that there were 10,000 table legs in stock, but had no easy way to determine if those table legs had been wrapped, labeled, and boxed. As a result, the company was often over stocked to ensure they could meet demand. With NexTec Group’s solution, Waddell has complete information about its inventory. Staff can tell at a glance the quantities that are packaged, labeled and ready to ship—and the on-hand quantities that are not yet packaged and labeled. “This solution has enabled us to reduce our inventory overhead, and save the company money,” explains Kibler.



NexTec created an innovative solution to Waddell Manufacturing’s unique needs.

Order Processing Efficiencies

Many of Waddell’s largest customers require the ability to place their orders and to receive invoices electronically via EDI (Electronic Data Interchange). NexTec Group’s solution provides an EDI mechanism that works efficiently for Waddell. Orders are received electronically and imported into the Sales Order module. Upon shipment, the EDI mechanism generates Advanced Shipping Notices (ASNs) and electronic invoices. These documents are then exported and transmitted.

Waddell receives 75 percent of its orders electronically, the remaining 25 percent are more labor intensive. A complex tiered pricing structure use to require the order entry staff to hand calculate the price for each line item. NexTec Group recommended a third-party item pricing matrix solution that automates the price calculation, greatly increasing the efficiency and accuracy of order entry.

A third-party integrated shipping solution produces the required bill of lading documents, prints the bar-coded shipping labels, and collects the data used in the ASN sent via EDI to the customer.

Long-Term Partners

“One of the best things I can say about NexTec is that they ask great questions,” says Stojadinovic, “They ask us questions that cause us to rethink old processes that don’t work well anymore—and then they offer us solutions that work.”

The success Waddell has enjoyed as a result of NexTec Group gives Kibler great confidence in the company and the solutions it provides, “We’ve faced hefty challenges, and NexTec has always come through for us.”

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