



CASE STUDY: Soutl Wholesale

SOULT WHOLESALE BUILDS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE WITH THE HELP OF THE ROBOCOM

Soutl Wholesale is a building materials wholesaler headquartered in Pennsylvania. The company sells a wide variety of products including siding, vinyl siding, ceiling tile, doors and windows. Situated on 20 acres, the company manages its operations across 30 different buildings. Given the size of its business, efficient and streamlined operations are critical to keeping Soutl's business running smoothly. Since 1998, Soutl Wholesale has relied on the Robocom Next Generation Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution to deliver the visibility and control it needs to maximize its operations and keep its customers satisfied.

Prior to choosing Robocom, Soutl Wholesale was using an ERP system originally designed for retailers. The solution lacked the industry-specific features the distributor needed to effectively manage its business, for example, flexible pricing and the ability to capture a variety of units of measure. To keep up with the demands of the market and maximize its operations, the company realized it was time to make a change.

ROBOCOM DELIVERS INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC SOLUTION AND EXPERTISE

In its search for a new solution, Soutl Wholesale wanted a flexible system that was built for the distribution industry. Reliability and real-time visibility were a must. The company learned about Robocom from Armstrong Ceilings who had recently conducted its own search to find the best software solutions for their distributors. After a thorough evaluation, Soutl Wholesale determined that the Robocom ERP solution was the best fit for its needs—offering both industry-specific features and expertise.

Robocom's Next Generation distribution software is a comprehensive Enterprise Resource Planning system that allows wholesalers and distributors like Soutl to maximize fulfillment by automating processes and analyzing operations. Designed specifically for distribution businesses, Next Generation empowers Soutl to manage all aspects of its supply chain management processes, from controlling inventory, purchasing and receiving to order capturing and processing to replenishing, picking, shipping and financial processing.

Real-Time Inventory Management

Using Robocom, Soutl Wholesale's business-critical information concerning quantities available to sell, committed quantities against customer sales orders, and on order from vendors—for all of its warehouses—is up to date and accessible at all times.

SOLUTION SNAPSHOT

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

To meet the demands of the market and maximize its operations, Soutl Wholesale sought a flexible ERP system built for the distribution industry to manage its supply chain operations.

ROBOCOM SOLUTION

The organization chose Robocom's Next Generation Enterprise Resource Planning solution to manage all aspects of its supply chain management processes, from controlling inventory, purchasing and receiving to order capturing and processing to replenishing, picking, shipping and financial processing.

RESULTS

Using Robocom, Soutl Wholesale has complete control over its inventory process through real-time visibility. And robust reporting delivers invaluable insight to help the company maximize revenue and maintain its competitive edge.

“There are companies far bigger than ours that can’t generate the kind of data I want to see – the kind of data we get from Robocom. This level of insight is absolutely a competitive advantage for our organization.”

*— Jeb Soult
Vice President
Soult Wholesale*

On average, Soult Wholesale manages inventory for 120 different vendors. While the company has around 100,000 different SKUs within the system, it only stocks about 3,000 of the SKUs within its warehouses. Therefore, it is critical that the company is able to identify what it has in stock, what it needs to replenish, special orders, and so forth.

“When a customer calls in it is imperative that we know whether we have the items in stock, if they are backordered, if they need to be special ordered, etc. That is key to maintaining customer satisfaction,” explains Jeb Soult, Vice President of Soult Wholesale. “Our Robocom system gives us the real-time visibility we need to have complete control over our inventory process and maximize our revenue.”

Demand Planning and Purchase Management

Soult is using the Robocom ERP system for demand planning and purchase management. The Demand Planning module reviews inventory availability and outstanding orders to calculate the suggested economic order quantity for those items that need to be ordered. The system takes into account average usage, lead times, safety stock, order point, minimum quantity, maximum quantity, line points and review cycles as part of the demand planning process. Demand planning algorithms include product line targets based on quantity, dollars, weight and volume.

Seamlessly integrated with the Inventory Management, Sales Order Management, Accounts Payable and General Ledger modules, Next Generation Demand Planning & Purchasing Management Software has everything Soult needs to make the best buying decisions.

“This feature is particularly beneficial during the summer, our busy season,” explains Soult. “With Robocom, we are able to maintain proper inventory balances to satisfy customer demand, which improves customer service levels and decreases operational costs.”

Pricing Flexibility

Soult says another primary reason the company chose Robocom is because it offers flexible pricing options. The pricing engine automatically calculates the price for each sales order line by going through a multi-step hierarchy, so the distributor is not dependent on a sales representative or order entry clerk to determine prices. However, to provide maximum flexibility, with proper authorization Soult’s sales representatives and order entry clerks are empowered to override the system-suggested price with an audit trail of such overrides.

Robust Reporting Delivers Invaluable Insight and Competitive Edge

Robocom’s robust reporting features enable Soult Wholesale’s executives to slice and dice information and drill down into the data. “This level of information gives us the insight we need to make informed decisions so we can manage our business proactively, for example, sales histories. There are companies far bigger than ours that can’t generate the kind of data I want to see – the kind of data we get from Robocom. This level of insight is absolutely a competitive advantage for our organization.”

Building a Stronger Business with Robocom

Robocom has met Soult Wholesale's enterprise resource planning requirements for close to two decades, and Soult expects that Robocom will continue to support their business well into the future. "Robocom has been a valuable partner to us over the years. The technology continues to evolve to meet the changing demands of the market, and the company has always been very responsive to our needs. Though to be honest, we don't have to interact with them very often because the system is so reliable; it just works. What more could you ask for?"

ABOUT ROBOCOM SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL

Robocom Systems develops, licenses and supports Supply Chain Execution software solutions, including Warehouse Management, 3PL Billing, Transportation Management, Voice Technology and Labor Management. An Enterprise Transportation System and Enterprise Resource Planning System round out the Supply Chain Execution offering. Robocom's investment in research and development is keenly focused on the needs of the business leaders responsible for the day-to-day results in warehousing, distribution, third party logistics, transportation and trucking operations. For more information visit www.robocom.com

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