



At a Glance

Harvey Vogel Manufacturing Co.

Industry

Metal Stamping

Headquarters

Woodbury, MN

Employees

130 employees

Solutions

Epicor Vantage

Business Challenge

Needed a system that would better manage job costs, enhance plant communication and improve customer service.

Solution

Integrated manufacturing enterprise resource planning solution powerful reporting and analytic capabilities

Business Benefits

- Ability to provide real-time plant views and simplified job updates
- Windows-based interface simplifies navigation throughout the system saving time

Return on Investment

- Significant cost savings realized with ability to evaluate WIP and up-to-the-minute costs
- Operating margins significantly increased due to streamlining processes

To better manage job costs, enhance plant communication and improve customer service, Harvey Vogel Manufacturing chose Epicor Vantage to help run its metal stamping and fabrication operation. Company productivity increased significantly after Vantage-related streamlining “Epicor Vantage provided benefits almost immediately—especially real-time plant views and simplified job updates,” says Todd Caughey, Director of Information Technology at Harvey Vogel Manufacturing (HVMC), a custom metal stamper located in Woodbury, MN.

When Caughey joined HVMC in 1997, his primary assignment was to replace their current ERP system. During the year-long search process, HVMC evaluated different vendors and prioritized company requirements. Vantage was finally selected based on fit, price and customer support.

Due to a busy plant workload, implementation stretched over six months, beginning in September 2000. “We easily could have done it in three,” recalls Caughey. “The Epicor guidebook and our consultant were both excellent. The plan covered all the bases. “It was my fourth MRP-type implementation in my 25-year career—and by far the smoothest,” recalls Caughey, who adds that the company today has 30 licensed Vantage users and 10 data collection licenses.

Improved Customer Service

HVMC provides metal stamping and value-added services to a diverse set of customers, with products ranging from simple ice cream scoops and bagel-slicer blades to complex motorcycle parts and electronic cabinets. One of the company’s strengths is the ability to select the most cost-effective production method for each job, ranging from turret press to progressive tooling. While HVMC’s customer base is worldwide, its primary target is U.S. manufacturers.

Vantage enables HVMC to remain focused on serving all its customers’ needs. Caughey says the Windows-based interface simplifies navigation throughout the

system, whether making a schedule change or responding to a customer question. Because information is more accessible, customer inquiries can be answered immediately. For example, shipments are tracked quickly because UPS delivery bar codes are scanned directly into Vantage.

Tailor-Made Reports

Caughey claims the number-one benefit from Vantage is the ability to create tailor-made reports and analytical tools. "The Vantage reporting tools provide very simple, but powerful reporting capabilities," comments Caughey, who says that he has written almost 400 reports—some in less than 30 minutes. Vantage makes it easy to add reports to menus or export data into other applications like spreadsheets.

"We've created a variety of reports designed to give everyone—from the shop floor to the president's office—a very good sense of what is going on," explains Caughey, adding that production supervisors are now more empowered and given valuable information on efficiencies.

HVMC is in the process of implementing Vantage Business Intelligence, which will automate some job reporting and analysis functions. It also features an extensive set of graphical and tabular reports.

Working Smarter

One of HVMC's top criteria for selecting a software system was the ability to provide real-time job costing information. "We wanted to know early on if a job was exceeding expected costs," explains Caughey. "In the past, we wouldn't know if we made or lost money until after the job was closed."

Using Vantage's reporting capabilities, HVMC is able to evaluate WIP and up-to-the-minute costs, analyzing that information against total potential billings for the job. Problems are identified early on, while there's still an opportunity for corrections. Caughey says the savings from this report alone have been significant.

Another report prints a set of labels whenever a job traveler is printed, used to help identify bin tags as jobs move around the production floor. In the past, operations would sometimes get skipped because parts were not identified correctly. Annual savings due to reduced errors in production and shipping from this report alone was a significant percentage of the system cost.

"Vantage helps our personnel perform jobs that add value to our company—knowledge work and not busy work," explains Caughey. Because of Vantage, several administrative positions were eliminated; there was no longer the need to have someone re-enter data or synthesize data from separate systems. Savings in the first year alone were enough to completely pay for Vantage.

Although company sales have not increased since 2000, Caughey says operating margins are up significantly due to Vantage-related streamlining. "Our diversity has helped us weather the economic downturn better than many companies," says Caughey.

Partnership with Epicor

Caughey says HVMC is very happy with Vantage, both for helping to achieve company objectives and providing a framework for ongoing improvements. "We have already saved far more money than it cost," notes Caughey. "Vantage is very easy to administer and the reporting capabilities make me look like a wizard." He serves as the entire IT department and says Vantage administration takes less than 10 percent of his time. "Vantage is a very stable system and the underlying Progress database is excellent," he explains.

"Just one Vantage report saves us a significant percentage of the system cost annually from reduced errors in production and shipping."

Todd Caughey, director of IT
Harvey Vogel Manufacturing

About Epicor

Epicor is a leading provider of enterprise business software solutions to the midmarket and divisions of Global 1000 companies. Founded in 1984, Epicor serves over 20,000 customers in more than 140 countries, providing solutions in over 30 languages.

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