



At a Glance

VMI Americas

Industry

Manufacturer of machines used in tire assembly and industrial rubber processing

Headquarters

Stow, Ohio

Employees

37 employees

Solution

Epicor Vantage

Business Challenge

Disconnected software systems for accounting, purchase orders and bill of materials slowed productivity

Solution

An integrated manufacturing enterprise resource planning solution to streamline business processes

Business Benefits

- Ease of use and implementation
- Detailed job costing
- Enhanced production schedule capabilities

Return On Investment

- Able to hit within 1 to 2 percent of budget estimates
- Decreased delivery times down to 16 weeks from a standard 22 to 26 weeks

"Before Vantage, we had a number of disconnected software systems," explains Rick Lane, controller with VMI Americas in Stow, Ohio. "These systems included an accounting package, a database for purchase orders, and word processing for bills of materials and engineering documentation.

"We liked the overall connectivity of Vantage, how everything flowed together," says Lane. "We also felt good about Epicor, the company behind the software. And because a number of our employees were not very experienced with computers, another key factor was a user-friendly interface."

VMI Americas manufactures machines used in tire assembly and industrial rubber processing. Weighing up to 8 tons, a VMI tire-making machine can produce up to 1,000 tires daily. Worldwide, VMI works with virtually every tire manufacturer, including The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, Michelin Group, and Cooper Tire and Rubber. In rubber processing, VMI serves more than 300 customers across North America. The parent company, VMI Epe, is headquartered in the Netherlands. The Ohio plant is the only VMI facility of its type in the United States, and only one of three worldwide.

"Implementing Vantage went very smoothly. We were extremely pleased," notes Lane. After his on-site training, Lane trained other employees, or they learned on their own. VMI went live with Vantage on April 1, 1995. "We were off and running from the first day. We had entered only minimal data before going live and chose to build our database on the fly." VMI began running Vantage on a Novell® network, but Lane says they've used Microsoft Windows NT for the past year.

"Our old job costing software was not very detailed and didn't provide much material cost data," says Lane. After rebuilding the cost database in Vantage, VMI has been able to hit within 1 to 2 percent of budget estimates on standard equipment, compared to 15 to 25 percent variances before.

"We finally have a good schedule in the shop, enabling us to know when certain raw materials will be needed based on future assembly dates," notes Lane. Delivery times have also decreased significantly, from a standard 22 to 26 weeks down to 16 weeks. "We recently delivered a major machine in just 11 weeks," he adds.

Developing this machinery requires a significant research and development investment, and VMI spends 6 percent of worldwide revenue on R&D. Many of VMI's technological advancements are focused on automation that reduces the resources required to operate equipment.

"Our technology leads the industry, and ongoing improvements give customers reasons for upgrading to our new equipment," explains Lane. "The machine-building industry is extremely competitive, and we look for anything that can give us an edge, whether it's faster delivery, lower prices or improved technology like the Vantage system."

"We've been able to hit within 1 to 2 percent of budget estimates on standard equipment with our cost database in Vantage. We also finally have a good schedule in the shop, and know when raw materials will be needed."

Rick Lane, controller
VMI Americas

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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