



Epicor Success Story

Apogee Enterprises, Inc.

Practices Lean Six Sigma principles with Epicor

Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Minneapolis, Minnesota
- ▶ Industry: Architecture, Engineering, Construction
- ▶ Number of Stores: 11
- ▶ Web site: www.apog.com



Success Highlights

Challenges

- ▶ A comprehensive 'Enterprise Systems Modernization Initiative', incorporating six independent subsidiaries using a common back-office business model and enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution

Solution

- ▶ Epicor ERP

Benefits

- ▶ Improved data accuracy and availability, providing support for Lean Six Sigma and Building Information Modeling (BIM) efforts, as well as accelerated product introductions in support of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)
- ▶ Supported a cultural shift within six, independent, yet incorporated businesses to better share information, collaborate and respond to 'green' industry growth
- ▶ Aided a company-wide 'Project Best' program, achieving IT ROI in support of becoming the 'best \$1B company' possible

Buildings are the primary consumer of energy around the world. Whether in developed countries or emerging markets around the globe, heating and powering the world's cities presents an enormous challenge in modernizing today's energy grids. Sustainable design in the architecture, engineering and construction industry has quickly become the standard in long-term benefit to society.

Apogee Enterprises, a leading provider of distinctive value-added glass solutions for enclosing commercial buildings and framing art, is the parent company of six affiliates which engineer, fabricate, install and repair the walls of glass and windows that enclose buildings, drastically improving energy efficiency, as well as providing hurricane and blast protection. Apogee's unique solutions continue to provide benefit to customers and the global community alike by greatly reducing energy expense, waste and excess – a theme shared in the company's enterprise systems modernization initiative, which includes the deployment of a next-generation enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution built on Epicor True SOA™.

Project Best and the Enterprise Systems Modernization Initiative

Apogee Enterprises' enterprise systems modernization initiative is a multi-year project incorporating six independent subsidiaries using a common back-office business model. Apogee's ongoing systems modernization initiative is part of



a broad initiative called 'Project Best' which aims to transform Apogee into the 'best \$1B company' possible by implementing the best information systems, using Lean Six Sigma throughout company operations, developing the best employees and the selective use of shared services.

Aiming to change not only business process, but the way people and business units integrate with each other and with outside vendors, partners and customers – Apogee sought solutions based on the latest, most collaborative technologies available. Encompassing the entire back office and manufacturing processes, Apogee has successfully implemented and end-to-end, next-generation ERP solution built by Epicor.

Oracle and SAP "too rigid"

As Al Sussman, chief information officer with Apogee explains, technology selection was a question of both culture and capability. "Given that we deal with independent business units, managers and executives don't like to be told how to do their job. They need a solution that works around their business, not one that makes them work around the software."

Following demonstrations from tier one ERP providers including Oracle and SAP, questions of flexibility arose. "Epicor was simply a much better cultural fit, others were too rigid," Sussman continues. "We searched for a common system that still remained unique and allowed for individual autonomy in different businesses." Apogee's next-generation implementation leverages Epicor True SOA™, a uniquely collaborative, flexible, service-oriented architecture.

"Architecture more than anything put Epicor over the top. Our old systems eventually became quite labor-intensive and difficult to change. The ability to specify individual processes without modifying any underlying infrastructure is huge for us."

"Best \$1B Company"

Apogee's business has continually grown over the course of the past decade, with the most substantial growth occurring in recent years. The company had close to \$1B in revenue earlier in the decade, but Apogee's company portfolio required changes. It had to find a way for its business units to work more closely together to combine the business units' products into ever higher-performance solutions. This prompted an internal goal within Apogee. "We don't want to be just a \$1B company, we want to be the best \$1B company possible," says Sussman.

Lean Six Sigma

Since 2001, Apogee has been practicing Six Sigma principles, and the process remains a cornerstone of 'Project Best'. Primarily manufacturing-focused, Six Sigma initiatives require the ability to analyze existing processes and deploy DMAIC (define, measure, analyze, improve, control) methods.

"Lean Six Sigma is data-oriented," states Sussman. "One frustration with the old system was that we needed accurate data and analysis tools." Without timely information and in-context analytics, companies are relegated to greater levels of waste and lower operating standards. "Data is food for Six Sigma," Sussman continues, "A capable ERP system is an enabler of Six Sigma, and Six Sigma is an enabler of ERP."

About Epicor

Epicor Software Corporation drives business growth. We provide flexible, industry-specific software that is designed around the needs of our manufacturing, distribution, retail, and service industry customers. More than 40 years of experience with our customers' unique business processes and operational requirements is built into every solution—in the cloud, hosted, or on premises. With a deep understanding of your industry, Epicor solutions spur growth while managing complexity. The result is powerful solutions that free your resources so you can grow your business. For more information, [connect with Epicor](#) or visit www.epicor.com.



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