



Driftwood Garden Center Finds Success with New Informative Tools

Company Facts

- Location: Naples, Florida and Estero, Florida
- Industry: Lawn/Garden
- Number of Locations: 2
- Web site: www.driftwoodgardencenter.com
- Affiliations: True Value, Home & Garden Showplace

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Brad Hazelett, Co-owner | Driftwood Garden Center

Since 1984, the Hazelett family has owned Driftwood Garden Center, with two locations in Florida—Naples and Estero, which opened in 1998. Driftwood Garden Center’s full-service garden centers offer a wide selection of plants, holiday and gifts, florist, water gardens, gardening classes, and landscape installations. The retailer offers beautiful showrooms that delight customers who enjoy walking through for inspiration. During the peak season, the staff grows to approximately 80 employees, throughout the remainder of the year it operates with about 55 people. Driftwood Garden Center has relied on its Epicor Eagle business management solution to run the centers’ for the past ten years. Today, Brad Hazelett, oversees the company’s IT department and recently added Epicor Eagle Inventory Planner and Epicor Eagle Performance Manager, which gives him and the rest of the management team more clarity through data, dashboards and scorecards to make the best business decisions.

Epicor Eagle Inventory Planner Takes The Legwork Out of Inventory Control

Before implementing Inventory Planner, the staff at Driftwood Garden Center spent a lot of time walking the center checking on inventory, but never had a real grasp on their inventory. Seasonal gifts and live plant materials also presented some unique challenges for the garden center. “With Inventory Planner we’re able to use the built-in forecasting models, like Best-Fit forecasting for the items needing aggressive stock turns,” said Hazelett. “This tool makes it far easier and immeasurably more

Success Highlights

Challenges

- Little visibility into promotion effectiveness
- No time to search the Epicor Eagle system for data
- Seasonal gift items and unsellable plant material was an inventory nightmare

Solution

- Epicor Eagle® Inventory Planner
- Epicor Eagle Performance Manager
- Epicor Eagle Loyalty

Benefits

- Provides buyers with solid inventory and sales information
- Increase turns with fewer stock outs
- Drives traffic and increases sales with repeat customers
- Delivers analytical tools to focus on the things that count

efficient than anything we have tried before. “We used to send our buyers to buying shows, and then we’d get stock coming in, many times scratching our heads and wondering where some of these numbers came from,” said Hazelett. “Now, we trust the forecasting models and rather than going to these shows and thinking ‘we sell a lot of these, so let’s buy a lot of these,’ we let Inventory Planner objectively identify the best stocking levels for us.”

“Inventory Planner forces our buyers and our managers to make better use of their time by taking the guess work out of inventory tasks,” Hazelett. “Physical cycle counts now double-check the computer reports. It’s a lot more efficient than walking around with a legal pad looking for what’s empty on shelves and in the stock room.”

The new discipline for managing inventory opened new possibilities for Driftwood Garden Center to lower inventory levels, while maximizing sales. “I started focusing on the rankings by including the popularity code on our restocking orders,” said Hazelett. “The formulas ensure that we have more of the bestsellers and less seasonal items. It’s improved our inventory turns and streamlined our inventory tasks as a result.”

A Window of Possibilities

When Hazelett saw a demonstration of Performance Manager at a True Value Market, he was struck by the fact that it offered a multitude of possibilities. “Epicor Eagle Business Advisor was a decent tool, but Performance Manager has customer information, sales performance, the market basket—information was right there to see without searching or mining for it,” said Hazelett. “It was an easy decision to purchase this module.”

“It’s changed the way we do business,” said Hazelett. “Performance Manager makes it easy to share information with our managers. For instance, promotions are a big part of our business, so seeing what’s selling and what’s not gives instant feedback for the next promotion. Other reports allow our managers to monitor price changes and

adjust retail prices accordingly; something that often just fell through the cracks. The team is more proactive, so that we’re not losing margin nor are we overpriced. I use the purchasing, forecasts and inventory reports to closely monitor inventory levels, especially nearing the end of peak selling seasons.”

Market Basket is a popular tool that identifies products purchased together to reveal shopping patterns. When Driftwood Garden Center examined some of SKUs with Market Basket, they were astonished by what they discovered. “Fall in Florida is the buying season for annuals,” said Hazelett. “When we pulled up the annual plant SKUs, we noticed an absence of fertilizer. How was it that thousands of Impatiens and Geraniums were going out the door, and yet, nowhere in the Market Basket Top 20 was a single bag of fertilizer? We consolidated the fertilizer choices, re-trained our staff to recommend specific fertilizers and changed the displays to include fertilizers, additives and soil conditioners, our sales of these products went through the roof. Market Basket is a crazy powerful piece of software, a really neat tool.”

Epicor Eagle Performance Manager Makes Money

“The best thing about Inventory Planner and Performance Manager is that the tools allow us to focus on the things that make us money, such as items that we don’t want to run out of,” said Hazelett. “It’s right there, plain as day. We don’t need to spend 50% of our time worrying about things that we aren’t making money on. Rather, we need to spend 80% of our time on the top 20 things that move the business forward. That’s the inventory story, but it’s the same if you are looking at customers, vendors, or departments. Which customers buy the most? Which vendors have the best margins? Which departments have the highest volume? Performance Manager is so clear and so visual that it’s the knock on the side of the head. It’s definitely worth the cost, because it’s like Business Advisor on steroids—at least a tenfold improvement.”

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Brad Hazelett, Co-owner

The Power of Customer Loyalty

About six months ago Driftwood Garden Center launched a customer loyalty program using Epicor Eagle Loyalty to help them to capture point of sale (POS) customer data—this tool calculates, stores, monitors and rewards customers. Performance Manager helped Hazelett determine which cashiers needed additional training to promote or to properly complete the loyalty program enrollments. “We launched the program with a Plant of the Week special price offer, in order to promote sign-ups and encourage return shoppers,” said Hazelett. “The program was a success and we now have almost 14,000 loyalty program customers. In addition to increasing repeat customer sales, the Eagle Loyalty solution enables us to better serve our customers with the automatic return item look up and reward point redemption at POS. Implementing Epicor Software business management solutions like Eagle Loyalty is by far the biggest and most successful thing that we’ve done to tangibly advance our business. It has been phenomenal.”

About Epicor

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