



Epicor Success Story

Southern Leather Company

Retaining Leadership and Profitability In a Declining Market

Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Memphis, TN
- ▶ Industry: Wholesale Shoe Product Distribution
- ▶ Website: www.southernleathercompany.com

Success Highlights

Challenges

- ▶ Retain leadership in a declining market through processes that enhance quality controls and best practices, control inventories, streamline jobs, and maximize new market opportunities

Solution

- ▶ Epicor® Prophet 21®

Benefits

- ▶ Reduce year-end processes by 50% with less staff
- ▶ Check the availability of inventory at multiple locations with the click of a mouse
- ▶ Access sales, cogs, customer histories, and sales tax information in real time
- ▶ Streamlined accounting processes



Southern Leather Company is the largest full-service distributor of shoe repair and store supplies in the United States. Founded in 1912, the company is a fourth-generation family business with warehouses in six major American cities. It carries widely recognized merchandise from leading vendors—including nearly 20,000 in-stock items ranging from fitting aids and care products to buckles, fasteners, cleaners, and foot-related medical accessories.

“We’ve successfully competed in a steadily declining industry for decades,” said Cindy Loewenberg, project manager, Southern Leather Company. “Our company has always been a business leader. Since we had no intention of losing grip on the market, we developed a comprehensive plan that enhanced process controls and best practices, controlled inventories, and streamlined jobs, and that will help us enter new industries as opportunities appear.”

Successfully competing in a declining industry with Prophet 21 software

Part of the company’s strategy included implementing the Epicor Prophet 21 enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution, which replaced a legacy system that did not show live stock on the shelf, connect the inventories at each location, or connect accounts payable to anything. In fact, before Prophet 21 software, employees would have to physically walk the warehouse to check for items when customers called. Available in multiple colors and sizes, many



of these products were hard to differentiate since they were listed in the previous system as one item. Warehouses also had to close for multiple days for annual inventories that involved travel by numerous individuals only to be completed with semi-correct results.

Transformational results

“Prophet 21 software has transformed our company,” stated Loewenberg. “All the guesswork has been removed. Not only can we glance at live inventories at multiple locations to check the availability of products, we can ship those items the same day from other locations with the click of a mouse. We also have the ability to conduct constant inventory counts and recounts that involve almost no travel or overtime.”

“Prior to Prophet 21 software, accounts payable was in no way connected to actual inventories,” she said. “There were no checks and balances. Now, we get alerts on the slightest of variances. This aspect alone has been invaluable in ensuring discounts and the proper receipts of goods. In fact, the savings alone probably paid for the cost of the Prophet 21 system.”

A new universe of efficiencies

According to Loewenberg, “accounting is a new universe.” All modules now post in real time to the general ledger so at any point the company can access sales, cogs, inventory values, and

sales tax information. The solution’s order processing capabilities also enable the company to track sales, backorders, and product availability as well as link returns to invoices and customer histories at each location.

With the former system, sales representatives had to hand-write and fax orders into locations, not even knowing if the inventory was available. Today, they enter orders with laptops or tablets, knowing if items need to be substituted or if orders can be filled complete or from other branches.

“Prophet 21 software has advanced our company on so many different levels,” added Loewenberg. “We can set up pricing for big-volume customers in a way that wasn’t possible before. Year-end processes took more than two months of intensive work by multiple people. We currently complete the same task in under a month with less staff.”

“In addition to expanding into new niche markets with the ability to fulfill special orders, Prophet 21 solution has allowed us to promote long-standing employees from order-takers to management roles. This would never have been possible without Prophet 21 software, and is one of the overall benefits that has made us most proud,” Loewenberg concluded.

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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