



## Epicor Success Story

# ACO Medical

### Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Charlotte, North Carolina
- ▶ Industry: Medical
- ▶ Number of Stores: 1
- ▶ Web site: [www.acomedsupply.com](http://www.acomedsupply.com)



### Success Highlights

#### Challenges

- ▶ Help a Charlotte, North Carolina distributor replace their accounting package with a robust, enterprise-wide solution

#### Solution

- ▶ Epicor® Prophet 21®

#### Benefits

- ▶ 5 percent increase in profit margins
- ▶ Average call time decreased by more than 60 percent

After a growth spurt that spanned five years and three progressively larger warehouses, ACO Medical executives knew it was time to replace their limited accounting package with a robust, enterprise-wide software solution. Jimmy Gray, ACO vice president, remembers his team's major criteria: The new solution had to simplify purchasing processes, fine-tune inventory management, and provide detailed, real-time reports. "Our goal was to find a package that gave our staff the tools they needed to provide platinum service," Gray says.

Epicor Prophet 21 offered ACO executives everything on their wish list. "Prophet 21 gave us what we needed to enhance service levels and handle new business without increasing overhead," Gray says. "It's one of the reasons we've been able to grow so quickly."

#### Extensive Offerings

Founded in 1995 to provide North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia with DonJoy orthopedic products, ACO has expanded its inventory to offer an increasing variety of medical supplies and equipment. Now, in addition to carrying traditional stock items like fracture walker boots and finger splints, the company offers everything from anti-inflammatory injectables to wooden exam tables.



According to Eric Ellis, IT director at the Charlotte, North Carolina company, Prophet 21 helps ACO staff determine which items will best fill customer needs. "Prophet 21 enables us to sort all of our SKUs into A, B, and C classifications, and then tells us how much inventory we need to bring in on a weekly or monthly basis," he says. "Determining requirements for major vendors takes seconds instead of hours."

Because Prophet 21 automates purchasing processes, ACO now operates without a dedicated, full-time purchasing agent, saving the company tens of thousands of dollars per year. "It saves us one full person—which in and of itself has pretty much paid for the entire solution," Ellis says.

## A Diverse Customer Base

ACO's customer base consists of busy doctors, office personnel at rehabilitation facilities, and purchasing agents at hospitals and medical schools—people who cannot spend all day on the telephone. Yet, before investing in Prophet 21, ACO service staff often kept customers on the line for as long as 10 or 15 minutes. "Sometimes, it took a full minute to pull information for a single item," Ellis remembers. "When someone called to order 45 or 50 different items, they knew they'd be on the line for a while."

Because Prophet 21 offers easy access to extensive item and customer information, the average time ACO customer service representatives spend taking an order has dropped from about three minutes to less than one. "Because it's so easy to accept

and enter orders, Prophet 21 has helped us manage at least 10 percent more business," Ellis says. "It's increased our existing staff's efficiency and productivity dramatically."

## Increasing Margins

Without the proper reporting and analysis tools, it can be difficult to understand exactly how profitable a company is. "You can't manage what you can't measure," Ellis relates.

Luckily, Prophet 21 gives Ellis, Gray, and other ACO executives the tools they need to maintain—and grow—profit margins. "Thanks to increased visibility, we're able to see exactly where margins fall and how much money we're making on our products," he says. "We can also view each sales representative's overall profitability, so we know who might need a little push."

Thanks to this increased visibility, ACO has boosted its bottom line by approximately 5 percent. "Prophet 21 has helped us determine where to focus sales and management efforts," Gray contends. "It's done wonders in terms of pulling us out of the dark."

Ellis concludes: "Prophet 21 is the next level tool for medical distributors. It has already moved our company three levels past where we started and stands to move us five levels past that this year with the implementation and launch of B2B Seller—which opens the door to sales force automation, B2B and B2C transactions. It was the best thing we could have done to help grow our business."

## About Epicor

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