

Star Lumber & Supply Co.

Fourth-Generation Lumber and Building Materials Business Sees Great Progress With Epicor BisTrack Software



Company Facts

Overview

- ▶ Location—Wichita, Kansas
- ▶ Industry—Lumber and Building Materials
- ▶ Number of Locations—8
- ▶ Number of Employees—325
- ▶ Website—www.starlumber.com



Success Highlights

Challenges

- ▶ Replace home-grown system with new technology to maintain successful and growing operations

Solution

- ▶ Epicor® BisTrack™
- ▶ Epicor BisTrack Delivery
- ▶ Epicor BisTrack Journey Planner

Benefits

- ▶ Reduced time it takes to complete window order entry quotes by 95%
- ▶ Minimized errors and eliminated unproductive time re-keying information
- ▶ Freed sales team to focus on finding new customers and grow business
- ▶ Gathered delivery truck location information much faster
- ▶ Enabled quick access to real-time delivery data

Star Lumber & Supply Co. is a nearly 80-year-old lumber and building materials (LBM) company based in Wichita, Kansas. As a family-owned, fourth-generation business, Star Lumber has broad-reaching operations—supplying building materials, trust plant delivery, door processing, a custom mill, flooring, and installation to the surrounding areas.

Efficiently adding value with technology

In 2017, Star Lumber implemented Epicor BisTrack software to streamline operations and set the business up for continued growth. “We’ve always embraced technology, and that’s part of what makes us different,” said Patrick Goebel, president, Star Lumber & Supply Co. “To have technology, people, and processes that allows us to efficiently add value—and still be low cost—makes us successful. Leaning on industry partnerships—such as the one with Epicor—helps strengthen our market share and offer our customers something really valuable.”

“For years, we used a home-grown system, but we recognized we had to make a change to stay competitive,” he continued. “Epicor was a provider we initially reached out to, and we instantly realized that Epicor BisTrack software was a powerful system—the support was impressive and it was an industry leader. We selected the BisTrack solution to help us maintain successful and growing operations.”

Implementation of seamless software

“We wanted to implement the latest technology, and BisTrack software allowed us to do that,” said Dave Gregory, IT director, Star Lumber. “Implementation of BisTrack software was easy and well thought out by the Epicor team. We spent a lot of time preparing for BisTrack software, which paid out endlessly—the more you put into it, the more you’re going to get out of it. The Epicor assistance throughout the entire implementation was totally hands on, and the BisTrack solution implementers and project leadership team are the real reason we succeeded in a

smooth roll out. It was amazing what they knew about our business and how much they knew about building materials.”

“We are probably some of the biggest data hogs around, so the data conversion process required a lot of data,” continued Gregory. “We thrive on data and provide information to our entire team and our customers. The BisTrack software data conversion needed to be a flawless process, which we found to be easy. Of all the software rollouts I’ve seen, this was by far the best. BisTrack software is the perfect package for us.”

Benefits of BisTrack software

“The immediate benefits of BisTrack software have been on the front end with our salespeople,” offered Goebel. “I was pleasantly surprised how quickly they adopted it. For example, converting window quotes in our previous ERP system used to take upwards of an hour and a half. Now, with BisTrack software, it takes three to four minutes. It has also reduced errors and eliminated the unproductive time re-keying information. We can capture our costs in the system more efficiently, too. Our team doesn’t know how they would live without BisTrack software today.”

“Previously, we had to type everything in manually, and it would take two hours for each large window order,” added Eric Chippeaux, commercial sales manager, Star Lumber. “With BisTrack software, we’re experiencing a big time savings. Our salespeople now have four to five extra hours in the day to find new customers and grow

the business—rather than only managing the customers we have. I can definitely see our business continue to grow and expand because of BisTrack software.”

Faster delivery details

“Through BisTrack software and GPS Insight, we’ve been able to gain detailed information faster about our delivery trucks,” Chippeaux continued. “We have 20 to 25 delivery trucks out daily, and if a driver is having trouble unloading, we can pull up GPS Insight to see exactly where the next closest driver is to have him help. In the past, we’d have to call everyone to see where they were. Now, we’re able to see exactly where they are in the software. In turn, our customers get materials faster with more accuracy.”

“The biggest benefit that we see from the BisTrack Delivery app is picture taking out in the field,” said Mike Meyer, director of operations, building materials division, Star Lumber. “When drivers get to a job site, we ask them to mark that they’ve arrived and then begin the unload process. They take multiple pictures to tell the delivery story—including if there’s a job address on the foundation, pictures of the materials, and where they left them. The bottom line with BisTrack Delivery is it shows when we arrived, when we left, and where the product was dropped on each jobsite.”

“The first week running on the BisTrack solution, we had a customer call us and say, ‘I don’t think you delivered my products yet.’ We looked in the software and immediately saw the delivery picture. That was an important feature that we never had before,” said Chippeaux. “In the past, we’d have to get a hold of the driver—who may or may not answer the phone. Now, we have that information at the click of a button—in about 20 seconds—and can pass that on to the customer immediately.”

Planning more efficient journeys

“When we were introduced to the BisTrack Journey Planner tool, we were extremely excited, because we could get away from clipboards and move to ‘point-and-click’ journeys. The Journey Planner application makes it much easier to make delivery changes on the fly,” said Meyer. “We can easily move journeys from one day to the next, and once we create journeys, we don’t have to start the process over if there’s a change. Before using Journey Planner, we duplicated all our work in the computer and on clipboards. Now, the clipboards stay empty. The process is very simple and a huge benefit for our business in terms of cost savings and delivery accuracy.”

“What I like most about the BisTrack business intelligence data is knowing the detailed journey information—number of journeys, total drops and stops, and delivered sales for each day. I can also access the driver’s or the specific truck’s production. It gives us crucial data to make educated business decisions and will help with future decisions on staffing and capital purchases for trucks,” said Meyer.

Real-time information

“We rely on real-time information about deliveries, and we want that linked to our customers in real time. We have that in BisTrack software now, and we can easily communicate with our customers,” said Gregory. “If there’s a subcontractor out in the field waiting to know when his order is going to be there, we can get that information and communicate it back to him. With up-to-the-minute data, we can see where our trucks are, which stop they’re on, which part of the stop, we know how long the truck is idle, and if the driver speeds in an area. This is big data, and in our world, getting accurate information on trucking is critical.”

Sales history with dashboards and smart views

For Star Lumber, keeping the business running smoothly and efficiently has always been top-of-mind. “We use BisTrack software dashboards for each of our departments. For example, commercial sales, new construction, West Street, re-modeler, etc. all have individual dashboards,” continued Chippeaux. “We can see sales history, open orders, or open POs for that specific department. This means our team members don’t have to search through every single order to find the information they need—they can just open the applicable dashboard. We used to be required to go through all 15 or 20 tickets to find the one we wanted. Now that we’ve switched to BisTrack software, we’re able to get these dashboards at the touch of a button. Our sales team is able to get data faster and access more timely information for our customers without having to search through a multitude of open orders.”

“The user-defined fields, smart clicks, and smart views in the BisTrack solution make it a very robust piece of software,” Gregory added. “BisTrack gives us the ability to have a mid-level manager create his own smart views and easily get that data out of the system. It’s one thing to get the big picture, but it’s another thing to get operational information back to the users who really need to make a decision. Access to information actually pays back dividends for each user. What we have seen so far is that BisTrack speeds up our processes to give people the information that they need at the right time.”

Seamless ordering

“I use BisTrack in my role to order products, do purchase orders, set up SKUs, and complete pricing,” said Kathy Ewarts, purchasing product manager, Star Lumber. “BisTrack software has many more capabilities than our previous software, and there’s more than one way to do something. BisTrack software allows us to customize our suggested orders for each person or each component. For example, I do things differently with the door mill orders than lumber orders. The customization of BisTrack also allows us to do our suggested

orders by sales or by usage. It makes my job easier and quicker because I’m getting what I need to look at—not what everybody needs. Our old system had the same view for everyone.”

“Purchasing with BisTrack software is a breeze—all our pricing is right there. We are able to monitor our margins a little more closely now,” she said.

A partnership for success

“I think that if you’re going to look for the best software in the market, it’s going to be BisTrack,” Gregory stated. “It is the leader in functionality, scope, enhancements, and rapid development. The entire BisTrack team is professional—their attitude, work ethic, intelligence, and knowledge of the industry is remarkable. They are head and shoulders above every other software vendor we looked at. We want a partner that wants us to succeed, and that’s what Epicor is all about—making it easier for us to succeed. Every day we save hundreds of man-hours, and we’re a lot more accurate—and that’s all thanks to BisTrack software.”

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 45 years of experience with our customers’ unique business processes and operational requirements is built into every solution—in the cloud 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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