



Epicor Success Story

Cole Hardware

Hardware Retailer Boosts Efficiencies With Epicor Solutions

Company Facts

- ▶ Location: San Francisco, California
- ▶ Industry: Hardware and Home Center
- ▶ Number of Employees: 100
- ▶ Website: www.colehardware.com
- ▶ Co-op: Ace



Success Highlights

Challenges

- ▶ Managing inventory in multi-store locations
- ▶ Delivering outstanding customer service to remain competitive
- ▶ Improving business analysis regarding market fluctuations that affect pricing

Solutions

- ▶ Epicor® Eagle N Series™
- ▶ Epicor Eagle Pricing Planner

Benefits

- ▶ Simplified technology upgrade process
- ▶ Easier to use interface
- ▶ Faster access to frequently used information
- ▶ Flexible solution to access data instantly
- ▶ Accuracy in analyzing and managing price changes
- ▶ Helps consistently price across all categories

Cole Hardware serves San Francisco, California residents with five retail stores and one commercial supply facility. Technology is at the heart of Cole Hardware operations, and Epicor has enabled the business to expand over the past 30 years. The business recently upgraded to Epicor Eagle N Series software as part of their strategy to use the latest technology to improve customer service and optimize business results.

Flexibility to add functionality

Simple to install, the new underlying technology in Eagle N Series made it easier for Cole Hardware to deploy across its business. "Switching to the new software was effortless because of features like the compatibility tool, which enabled us to customize terminal-by-terminal how much functionality we wanted," said Robin Miller, director of operations for Cole Hardware. "With over 70 computers to manage, spread across multiple locations, Eagle N Series gives us the flexibility to gradually add the new functionality at our own pace."

Miller continued, "The new user interface is easier to operate because it has a more modern look and feel of Microsoft® Office®, which most people are familiar with. A favorite feature is the new ribbon that allows us to add our most used functions to the favorites tab, giving us instant access to frequently viewed screens. These customizable ribbons give us access to real-time information to answer customer questions, such as inventory stock levels or custom orders. We can serve our customers faster and more efficiently with every transaction."

Cole Hardware customers have come to rely on their neighborhood store and also have the option to find products in the online store by selecting from over 70,000 items or by placing a custom order with the commercial division. "Providing excellent customer service is what we do and now we'll be more efficient doing it," said Miller. "With Epicor Eagle N Series, our processes are simplified, which enables us to realize efficiencies across the entire company and that adds up to measurable performance gains. Epicor is one of our strongest business partners. Our business wouldn't be what it is without the Eagle system."

More consistent pricing

Continuing its technology trend, Cole Hardware implemented Eagle Pricing Planner software to dynamically analyze and manage price changes. Pricing Planner provides insight and analysis on key factors affecting price. "Pricing Planner is very flexible and easy to use," said Miller. "I have access to all my data instantly."

Improve pricing consistency

The Category Analysis viewer gives the flexibility to group items in a variety of ways and compare. Cole Hardware performed a complete re-costing on vendor lines using the Category viewer. "I grouped items by vendor. Then I looked at the average gross profit for a vendor's line. Pricing Planner displays the year-to-date gross profit dollars and the average for that group all on one screen, so it was simple for me to find the deviations," said Miller. "Pricing Planner helps us to take action on individual items without worrying about the rest of the line."

Prior to Pricing Planner, that kind of in-depth analysis was difficult to accomplish. "It was almost impossible," said Miller. "Pricing analysis was cumbersome and unfocused. We would've had to search through reams of papers or dozens of reports. Pricing Planner has allowed us to be more consistent in our pricing across categories. It's easier to find the outliers and adjust them. If we price a line by gross profit, we know all items are correct."

Impact of pricing on sales

Using the Sales Velocity Analysis viewer, Cole Hardware can run a "what-if" analysis along with a "results" analysis after a price change has been implemented. "Ace's suggested retail prices for paint were higher than our prices," said Miller. "We experimented and raised prices on the quarts first. Then a couple months later, I used the Sales Velocity tool and analyzed the impact of those changes. Our unit sales dropped, but our gross profit dollars increased slightly. We decided it was a fair tradeoff for the quart-sized cans. We also decided from those results that we didn't want to proceed with price changes on the gallon-sized paint cans. It was a very enlightening and powerful analysis."

In the past, Cole Hardware had trouble anticipating how pricing changes would affect sales. "There had not been a good way to see the impact of pricing changes before we implemented them. With Pricing Planner, I know what the impact on sales will be," said Miller.

"I would recommend Pricing Planner to anyone who wants to get a good handle on pricing, ensure category consistency, and see the impact of future price changes," said Miller. "Epicor has a winning solution with Pricing Planner."

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 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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