



## Epicor Success Story

# First Choice Group

## First Choice Group implements Epicor to drive growth and support niche clients

### Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Staffordshire, UK
- ▶ Industry: Commercial Catering Products and Services
- ▶ Website: [www.firstchoice-cs.co.uk](http://www.firstchoice-cs.co.uk)



### Success Highlights

#### Challenges

- ▶ Supporting rapid growth plans
- ▶ Finding the right ERP solution for a complex business model

#### Solution

- ▶ Epicor® ERP

#### Benefits

- ▶ Supporting growth goals
- ▶ Improved productivity
- ▶ Added extras such as mobile CRM

Since its inception in 1999, the First Choice Group has firmly established itself as an industry leader by expanding its core business of commercial catering parts supply and diversifying into refrigeration, environmental solutions, and engineer training. The company has also moved into the laundry, coffee, and bakery spares market in order to provide a wider and more comprehensive service to its customer base.

Now employing 150 people at its base in Staffordshire, First Choice Group not only supplies spare parts for catering equipment from all the major manufacturers, it also offers the most diverse range of commonly needed food manufacturing spares anywhere in the UK. This breadth of service, alongside an impressive range of consumables and tools, has helped to secure the Group's place at the heart of the UK catering equipment service industry.

### Supporting growth goals

First Choice Group aims to increase company growth by 20–30 percent by the end of 2017. This desire for rapid expansion encouraged the company to review its current enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

Investigations uncovered several areas of weakness. The incumbent system was built on an old technology platform, presenting limitations from a customer relationship management (CRM) perspective with limited user interface tools that were hindering the organisation's ambitious growth plans and customer retention goals. The company knew that in order to meet its goals it would need to prioritise moving forward with the right ERP system.



The First Choice Group looked at numerous vendors, but discovered that when it came down to the finer requirements and level of customisation needed in its new system—for example, the software needed to integrate with a purpose-built warehouse data system already in use—Epicor Software was the only provider flexible enough to support the company’s bespoke requirements. In particular, Epicor could support anticipated growth in terms of staff expansion, an increased customer base, and new and improved logistics for ordering and delivery. The organisation viewed it to be the only supplier with robust and flexible enough software to meet their business needs.

## Exceeding expectations

Since the implementation of Epicor ERP, the First Choice Group has already expanded its workforce from 100 employees to 150. Consequently, the company feels it is well on its way to meet its growth goals next year.

“Each day we spend using the Epicor ERP software, the more we realise it delivers over and above our previous, out-of-date system,” says James Rostron, systems manager at The First Choice Group.

“We originally wanted Epicor ERP to replace and update our previous system, which was inhibiting growth, but we had very little expectation other than needing a system to aid business growth and make life easier for our employees.

Yet, as we continue to use Epicor ERP, we are discovering how the software can help us grow in other areas, better support our employees, improve our customer’s experience, and help evolve our business—with the ability to include mobile CRM.”

## Going forward

The old system was hindering the company’s ability to maintain its customer service excellence as it grew. Since moving to Epicor ERP, the First Choice Group now has the capability to develop more accurate plans for the future and realign its focus ahead of an upcoming move to new, larger premises.

Rostron concludes, “Epicor ERP has the capability to grow with us—ambitious targets or not. Yet the software is much more than just a growth enabler. Its flexibility has already improved our systems to strengthen productivity, effectively forecast our future plans, and meet our award-winning customer service standards. That’s why adopting Epicor technology makes it exciting for our business going forward.”

## 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](http://www.epicor.com).



### Contact us for more information on Epicor Products and Services

+44 (0)1344 468468 | [info.uk@epicor.com](mailto:info.uk@epicor.com) | [www.epicor.com/uk](http://www.epicor.com/uk)

**Corporate Office**  
804 Las Cimas Parkway  
Austin, TX 78746  
USA  
Toll Free: +1.888.448.2636  
Direct: +1.512.328.2300  
Fax: +1.512.278.5590

**Latin America and Caribbean**  
Blvd. Antonio L. Rodriguez #1882 Int. 104  
Plaza Central, Col. Santa Maria  
Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, CP 64650  
Mexico  
Phone: +52.81.1551.7100  
Fax: +52.81.1551.7117

**Europe, Middle East and Africa**  
No. 1 The Arena  
Downshire Way  
Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1PU  
United Kingdom  
Phone: +44.1344.468468  
Fax: +44.1344.468010

**Asia**  
238A Thomson Road #23-06  
Novena Square Tower A  
Singapore 307684  
Singapore  
Phone: +65.6333.8121  
Fax: +65.6333.8131

**Australia and New Zealand**  
Suite 2 Level 8,  
100 Pacific Highway  
North Sydney, NSW 2060  
Australia  
Phone: +61.2.9927.6200  
Fax: +61.2.9927.6298

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