



## Epicor Success Story

# Wholesale Plumbing Supply Company, Inc.

## Epicor Eclipse ERP improves inventory management for Midwest distributor

### Company Facts

- ▶ Location: St. Charles, Missouri
- ▶ Industry: Plumbing
- ▶ Number of Employees: 65
- ▶ Web site: [www.wpsco.com](http://www.wpsco.com)



### Success Highlights

#### Challenges

- ▶ Synchronize and improve inventory control, invoicing and accounts receivable capabilities across eight separate company locations of a Midwest plumbing distributor

#### Solution

- ▶ Epicor® Eclipse™

#### Benefits

- ▶ Better inventory management, enabling each company division to transfer products to other branches and fulfill customers' orders in real time
- ▶ Reduced inventory by 10-15%, enhancing cash flow
- ▶ Enhanced ability to track every order in real time and automatically send updated invoices to clients within 1-2 days of orders

For nearly seven decades, Wholesale Plumbing Supply Company of St. Charles, Missouri, has serviced the fine kitchen and bath product needs of plumbing contractors and the general public throughout the Greater St. Louis region (Missouri and Illinois).

"This is a highly competitive marketplace," says Thomas Ditchfield, who has been with the company for the past 25 years and now serves as Executive Vice President of General Operations. "There's no way to survive in this business without a deep sense of loyalty and dedication to quality and service."

Founded in 1957 by Jerome D'Angelo, Wholesale Plumbing is still under the supervision and ownership of the second and third generations of the D'Angelo family, who are directly involved with the management of all eight locations, 65 employees and a fleet of delivery trucks. In recent years, the company also expanded with the local acquisitions of Capital Supply and Strubberg Plumbing & Electrical, as well as the opening of the Premier Plumbing Studio, which provides ongoing displays and demonstrations of more than 200 product lines.

Given the complexity of its organization, Wholesale Plumbing began investigating an updated enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution for "simultaneously seeing everyone's inventory" and then "making transfers on the fly" to accommodate orders from any of its eight branches. After



researching numerous competitive systems, Wholesale Plumbing selected the Epicor Eclipse solution in 2003. Designed specifically for wholesalers in the plumbing, HVAC, electrical and PVF industries, Eclipse went live at Wholesale Plumbing in January 2004, after a "seamless three-month transition period," according to Ditchfield.

## Accurate inventory tracking in real time

"We were knocked out by the benefits provided by Eclipse," explains Ditchfield. "It did more than we even expected. All of the data we needed was there from the day we turned the switch. We now have the ability to track every order in real time and automatically send updated invoices to clients within 1-2 days of their orders. The time savings are tremendous. Instead of two people dedicated to billing, we now need only one.

"In addition, Eclipse provides such an accurate overview of our entire stock, no matter the location, that it has helped us to reduce inventory by 10-15 percent. The system even alerts us when we're low or about to run out of a specific item, which has enhanced our cash flow and revenue streams, since we're no longer overstocking the warehouse."

## Streamlined invoicing, accounts receivable and delivery

According to Ditchfield, Eclipse has also helped Wholesale Plumbing to computerize nearly all transactions, making the record-keeping process virtually paperless. This includes providing customers with 24/7, online access to purchasing

histories, such as detailed pricing and invoicing, as well as helping the accounting department to streamline all of the company's accounts receivable activities.

"With Eclipse, I now do in five minutes what used to take hours," offers Brenda Routsong, Wholesale Plumbing's Credit Manager for the past 15 years. "Updates are automatic and even include the latest tax-exempt information. Furthermore, with nearly 300 accounts, it's just so easy to review the purchases at each branch, instantaneously check invoice statuses and make changes with customers in real time. As a result, we are always up-to-date with the latest client payment instructions."

"I love the way Eclipse ties everything together," adds Ray Boudreau, the company's longtime Purchasing Agent. "You don't have to count inventory, which is extremely important when you have almost \$5 million of products in stock on a daily basis. E-mails containing all forms of client information can be sent from one screen. Eclipse has also enabled us to track the status of daily deliveries so we can give clients real-time arrival estimates. We could never do any of this before. The time savings are amazing."

## Support from a responsive partner

As for Epicor itself, Ditchfield enthuses about the partnership, "The support has been phenomenal. Epicor has been extremely responsive, and never failed to help us answer questions or overcome a challenge. They gave us everything we needed and more. We couldn't be happier."

## About Epicor

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