



Epicor Success Story

Metropolitan Pipe & Supply Company

Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Cambridge, Massachusetts
- ▶ Industry: Plumbing
- ▶ Number of Employees: 70
- ▶ Web site: www.metpipe.com



Success Highlights

Challenges

- ▶ Provide complete automation, expedited billing, and improved warehouse management to a fourth-generation New England plumbing supplier

Solution

- ▶ Epicor® Eclipse™ with Wireless Warehouse Management

Benefits

- ▶ Covered the cost of implementation within three months due to increased cash flow
- ▶ Reduced Accounting headcount by 25 percent while doing more, faster
- ▶ Orders picked more accurately and in less time

Content Header

Metropolitan Pipe & Supply Company (Met Pipe) knew they needed new software when employees were constantly running to the warehouse every time an order was placed, just to see if the item was in stock.

According to Met Pipe MIS Manager David Constantine, until they started using the Epicor Eclipse enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution, employees of the Cambridge, Massachusetts, company really did physically check the warehouse during most phone call orders.

With two locations, 70 employees and annual sales of close to \$36 million, Metropolitan Pipe & Supply Company is a leading independent wholesale distributor of plumbing, heating, pipe, valves, fittings, and industrial supplies throughout New England. The company is a fourth-generation family business that has succeeded by growing with the times and embracing new technologies.

When looking for an ERP solution in the mid-1990s, Constantine worked with a consultant to review several software packages. The goal was complete automation. "Everything we did took a really long time," explains Constantine. "We were still handwriting our orders. Our consultant urged us to reach high with our goals and choose a company who could grow with

us. She felt that the people behind Eclipse were the best in the business and that Epicor (then Eclipse Inc.) had the greatest potential for continuing to develop the package even beyond what we were seeing at that moment.”

Faster Billing = Better Cash Flow

Constantine noticed changes at Met Pipe soon after implementing the Eclipse solution in 1995. “Within three months, our cash flow had increased to the point where we covered the cost of implementation. With the new automation, we had control over our invoices and billing in ways that were just not possible before,” he states.

The speed of billing has been advantageous not only to Met Pipe, but to its customers, as well. “Our customers want to bill their clients as soon as they can, and with the Eclipse software, everything goes much quicker,” notes Constantine.

According to Constantine, the single best thing about the software was the increased efficiency throughout the company, particularly in the sales process. He explains, “We went from constantly hunting through files and folders to finding what we need (be it product cost or the last time a customer bought a particular item) with a few keystrokes. In the Accounting department, we reduced our personnel by 25 percent while doing more in less time.”

Efficiency and Productivity Gains in the Warehouse

Met Pipe installed the Eclipse Wireless Warehouse Management solution in 2003, and quickly saw very significant service level and efficiency gains in the warehouse, similar to the earlier experience in the office. Inventory accuracy and customer service improved, with orders being picked more accurately and in less time.

Some other examples of the company’s increased productivity in using Epicor products include:

- ▶ Quick exporting of custom pricing to customers for electronic catalogs
- ▶ Use of the StarShip™ UPS shipping system to build UPS Manifests and automatically update shipping charges on customer invoices
- ▶ Implementation of Time Clock for a more efficient way to record and report on work hours.

“People were able to command control of themselves and their desks again, and that made all the difference,” Constantine observes.

Keeping Up and Keeping Ahead

Equally important for Met Pipe, Epicor has been able to keep up with the company’s growth. The Eclipse software continues to evolve to reflect both Epicor advances and Metropolitan Pipe’s increased needs. Upgrades have included the ability to scan and copy customer purchase orders and vendor quotes, in order to back up notes with the details, and then attach them to sales orders or purchase orders for instant accessibility.

“We are not a paperless office yet, but this certainly saves us lots of time,” says Constantine. “Eclipse is high performance software for distribution, making us a technologically sophisticated vendor in a competitive marketplace. It is what you have to do to compete in this day and age.”

Epicor is helping Met Pipe into the future. “If you are not making improvements, you are falling behind, and likely will not be able to meet customer expectations. With Epicor Eclipse, we are not only keeping up, but keeping ahead of our competition,” Constantine concludes.

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.



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