

Auburn Consolidated Industries (ACI)

Infor XA with Manufacturing Essentials Implementation



customer success story
discrete manufacturing

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Michael Everley, ACI
Information Systems

THE COMPANY

Auburn Consolidated Industries (ACI) manufactures commercial landscape machinery, including zero-turn lawn mowers, front-, mid- and rear-mount finishing mowers, grass collectors, backhoes, snow blowers and trenchers, to name only a few of its products. The company's two lines of premium zero-turn commercial mowers are sold under the EverRide and Great Dane brands through a network of distributors and more than 1000 dealers in the United States, Australia, Canada, Puerto Rico and the United Kingdom. In addition to manufacturing the EverRide and Great Dane family of products, ACI currently manufactures products for other OEMs such as Case New Holland, John Deere and Kubota Corporation.

Headquartered in Auburn, Nebraska, ACI's manufacturing and design engineering facilities have been expanded on six occasions since 1979. Currently, the facilities total 145,100 square feet in three buildings. ACI has more than 75 years of manufacturing experience and takes extreme pride in producing a quality product that meets or exceeds customer's needs.

In total, the company produces nineteen basic types of products in over two hundred model configurations. Approximately 75 percent of the products have been designed in house, while others are customer designs.

THE SITUATION

ACI has been running Infor technology since 1982 in several different ways. The organization was also using Microsoft Access, Microsoft Excel and a few other tools to manipulate data and create visibility. But they soon realized that they were creating silos of data with all of the miscellaneous tools they were using.

“We took a long, hard look at our business system and realized we were using Infor the wrong way. We decided to relaunch Infor XA with Manufacturing Essentials as the core of our operations,” says Michael Everley, ACI Information Systems Manager. “One of our biggest hurdles was re-teaching our employees how to use the system we had in place and to stop using the other programs we had running along side it. We needed to focus on understanding the capabilities and power of the Infor solution.”

THE SOLUTION

Now, Infor manages ACI's entire business. “Infor is our accounting, purchasing, inventory control, and manufacturing systems—all wrapped up in one. It is the lifeblood of our company,” adds Everley.

Over the last two years, ACI has made a great many changes to its business processes to support the manufacture of its own brands. The business process changes are made and the Infor solution has been able to support the changes without additional modifications.



“Infor gives us amazing visibility. I truly can’t imagine our business without the Infor solution.”

**Brian Bradley
ACI, Plant Manager**

ACI prides itself on managing “continuous change”. The company has been able to change processes and use the Infor solution as a guide to how those processes will be carried out. “Infor allows us to analyze theories we have in a test environment, so we are able to perfect them before we move anything to a live environment. This enables us to implement changes with very low risk,” explains Sean Skaggs, ACI Lean Implementation Manager. “We also are not afraid to make changes, which has helped us stay a fluid organization. As customer requirements change, we are able to meet them—no matter what.”

With 712 whole goods that are manufactured with more than 18,000 parts, ACI is now able to manage its inventory better than ever. The company can now trust that the data coming out of the system is accurate. Increased visibility is also a result of the re-implemented solution. Now ACI is able to see orders on the plant floor, whether an OEM order or an EverRide order, and manage the inventory accordingly.

At ACI, The focus is always on quality, not quantity. “Infor gives us amazing visibility. We can manufacture a relatively small run of a product, or we can produce hundreds of one product. The quantity is less important, which lets us focus on quality,” says Brian Bradley, ACI Plant Manager. “I truly can’t imagine our business without the Infor solution.”

REAL RESULTS

“Since the introduction of Infor’s supply-chain management, we have been able to improve our business immensely. We now know what parts need to be worked on and when. Before that we were simply working on inventory, because we did not actually know what needed to be worked and when,” adds Phillip Kirwan-Hamilton, ACI president.

With the Infor solution ACI has also been able to:

- Double output per man-hour worked in two years
- Realize a 46-percent improvement in inventory turns in two years
- Improve sales by two-and-a-half times in the last two years
- Increase visibility to know exactly what parts need to be worked on and when
- Monitor customer needs and change the business accordingly

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