



## Epicor Success Story

# Prince Industries

### Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Carol Stream, Illinois
- ▶ Industry: Precision machining and fabrication
- ▶ Number of Employees: 250

### Success Highlights

#### Challenges

- ▶ Existing job shop software was ill-equipped to handle growing complexity of jobs for precision machining and manufacturing company with international operations

#### Solution

- ▶ Epicor® Vantage®
- ▶ Complete manufacturing system for mixedmode production, with integrated workflow processes and international capabilities, specifically Chinese language translation

#### Benefits

- ▶ Ability to manage and track complex, multi-stage production
- ▶ Real-time access to job costing and profitability data
- ▶ Full visibility for shop-floor personnel; easy “drill down” to information
- ▶ Improved communication between U.S. headquarters and Chinese facility
- ▶ Accelerated month-end accounting by approximately 25%



“Our full-service capabilities provide a competitive advantage,” says Dave Miller, systems administrator with Prince Industries. Prince, based in Carol Stream, Illinois, specializes in precision machining and sheet metal fabrication.

Miller says milling, turning, grinding, honing, value-added assembly, and sheet metal and welded fabrication are all handled under one roof, the company’s 64,000-square-foot headquarters facility with 200 employees.

“We don’t subcontract any of this work, so we can push jobs through quickly,” notes Miller. As an example, Miller cites their work for a recreation customer, where Prince both machines and fabricates components before welding them together.

Customers span many other industries, including agricultural and industrial equipment, medical technology, recreation products, and telecommunications. Currently the customer base is primarily domestic, with the majority located around the Chicago area.

“For our largest customer, a heavy equipment manufacturer, we make value-added assemblies ranging from 100 to 200 components, both machined and purchased by us,” explains Miller. These hydraulic-based controllers, operated like a video game joystick, are assembled and tested at Prince’s Illinois facility before shipment to the customer’s factory for final assembly.



Another significant customer makes dental instruments, and Prince machines stainless steel handles for handheld dental tools as well as various extrusions for larger x-ray equipment.

## Evolving into global manufacturer

“Our jobs keep getting more complicated and we wanted a software solution that we could grow with,” explains Miller. “Vantage definitely fit those criteria.”

Miller says Prince’s previous software package was more job shop oriented, unable to support the company’s evolution into a global manufacturer of more complex products. In 2002, Prince opened a 25,000-square-foot facility in Shanghai, China—a proactive, strategic decision to offer its customers a competitive alternative for highvolume production. “As our customers are shifting production to China, we want to be there supplying them,” explains Miller, who joined Prince in 1988. The Shanghai facility currently has 50 employees.

While researching software, Miller said Prince personnel made site visits and phone calls to other users, even speaking with competitors. From a membership survey by the Precision Machined Products Association (PMPA.org), Miller knew that many of Prince’s competitors were already having success with Vantage. Because Prince’s first software system was from DCD, a predecessor company to Epicor, Miller said his company also had some familiarity with elements of the system.

“I’ve been watching different software companies over the years, and Epicor impressed me for always being on the move, continually improving its products,” says Miller.

For the Shanghai facility, the availability of a Chinese language version was also a big advantage.

## Streamlining international communications

For international operations, Vantage also has brought measurable improvements and better communication. The Shanghai database is hosted in Illinois, with remote access enabling information to be shared immediately. Previously, data was exchanged via e-mailed spreadsheets. “Vantage enables us to easily take the pulse of their operations,” explains Miller.

“The system is still pretty new to our Chinese colleagues, and it’s wonderful to have Vantage available in their native language. With our previous software, it was too difficult for them to understand the terminology.”

From a purchasing standpoint, Prince considers the Shanghai facility a separate organization, complete with purchase orders and invoices. “They’re able to look at open orders, and we can see what shipments they’ve made,” explains Miller. “Vantage makes it easier to share information.”

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Dave Miller, System Administrator, Prince Industries, Inc.

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## Empowering employees with information

Prince selected Vantage in July, began implementation in August and went live in January. "We're very pleased with how well everything worked out, thanks in part to a strong effort by our core team," notes Miller.

Prince also uses Vantage CRM, an integrated customer relationship management module that enables sophisticated tracking and contact management through advanced collaboration and group sharing. Having a CRM solution directly integrated with the core Vantage manufacturing system has proven successful for Prince in building relationships and uncovering new revenue opportunities.

In Illinois, Prince has 40 full-license workstations and 10 data collection terminals on the shop floor. The Shanghai facility currently has eight users.

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While previous data collection screens showed only two lines of data, Prince employees can now access a wealth of information from user-friendly touch screens, using bar codes to clock in and out of jobs.

"Operators can see the next steps in the process, and learn what's coming up next," comments Miller. "We're empowering employees with more information."

Miller says everyone loves the ability to "drill down" from anywhere in the program, without having to back out first. "Vantage makes it very convenient to get information quickly."

Month-end accounting has accelerated by approximately 25%, and Miller expects even more improvement in the future.

From an administrative standpoint, Miller says Vantage has been phenomenal. "Updates are fast and seamless—automatically pushed to each client machine—and we no longer have any database issues." Miller concludes, "Vantage has definitely made my life a whole lot easier."

## 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).



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