Dexter Magnetic Technologies

Company Facts

- Location: Elk Grove Village, Illinois
- Industry: Precision Manufacturing
- Website: www.dextermag.com

Challenges

- Improve on-time delivery by reducing lengthy quality control document search-and-retrieval times and refining manufacturing execution.

Solution

- Epicor® ERP functions:
  - Finite Scheduling
  - Available-to-Promise
- Epicor® ECM (DocStar®)
- Epicor® Data Analytics (EDA)
- Epicor® Quick Ship

Benefits

- Achieved company-wide goal of improvements in on-time delivery with an investment of less than $50,000.
- Reduced time needed to search and retrieve all necessary documentation for packing and shipping from 10,000 employee hours to less than 3,000 annually.
- Leveraged Epicor ERP functionality for improved business intelligence and more efficient planning and scheduling.

Epicor ERP and ECM (DocStar) Helps Dramatically Improve On-Time Delivery

Dexter Magnetic Technologies offers superior magnetic solutions for products ranging from aerospace radar systems to nuclear magnetic-resonance imaging machines, hearing aids, and pacemakers. The company's philosophy of continuous improvement and customer satisfaction has earned it a solid reputation as the original architect of magnetic technology.

Founded in 1951 as Permag Corporation, Dexter has grown to be a full-service manufacturer and designer of complex magnetic assemblies for a global customer base, including the U.S. Department of Defense, medical device companies, and others that require exacting documentation and certification of parts and finished products to comply with regulatory requirements such as ITAR.

Ending the Paper Chase

A long-time Epicor ERP customer since 2004, in 2019, Dexter set out to improve on-time product delivery and identified issues with document search and-retrieval as one of its biggest sources of waste. Quality control was a traditional bottleneck due to the need to compile all necessary documentation required for packaging and shipping. Searching for a single misplaced document could take up to an hour, delaying shipment and delivery times, said Dave Patzwald, CIO, Dexter's head of IT.

> **“This is an absolute ‘no brainer’ for any industry where paperwork is involved.”**
>
> —Paul Berlin, Sr., Quality Engineer

“We started with receiving and realized the number of documents, certifications, details, and data that must accompany products numbered in the thousands and could take up to several hours to acquire them. Employees often had to leave one part of the plant and go to another to physically locate the necessary documentation,” he said.

During an Epicor value exchange workshop and in conjunction with their impending move from Epicor ERP 10.1 to 10.2, Dexter learned the Epicor Enterprise Content Management system (DocStar) could help eliminate excessive document search-and-retrieval times. The tight integration between Epicor ECM and ERP offered significant value from an operational execution perspective.

Easy Document Access and Retrieval

Dexter deployed the DocStar solution in August 2020. “The system is very intuitive and there isn’t a lot of training required. We were able to upload 10,000 documents into the DocStar system for easy retrieval in only a matter of weeks,” said Paul Berlin, Sr., the quality engineer at Dexter who headed up the Epicor ECM deployment.

Authorized personnel can easily retrieve any relevant document in the system by entering a date, order number, or purchase order. They can also use a Boolean string to retrieve a series of documents instantaneously.

Epicor ECM can attach all documentation associated with a purchase order number, which users can accomplish from anywhere within the facility with just a few keystrokes. Dexter also leverages the PackageWorks feature, which enables users to pull together large packages of documentation – 100 pages or more – in only a few seconds’ time.

Patzwald estimates Dexter has reduced the time needed to complete documentation and quality control from 10,000 hours to less than 3,000 hours a year – “radically” increasing on-time deliveries for a nominal investment of less than $50,000.

“This is an absolute ‘no brainer’ for any industry where paperwork is involved,” Berlin said.

Epicor ERP Functionality Provides Additional Benefits

Dexter also took advantage of other Epicor ERP offerings to further enhance the speed and efficiency of product delivery. This included Epicor Data Analytics (EDA), providing business intelligence for improved operational execution and decision making.

Finite Scheduling and Available-to-Promise features provide Dexter with advanced planning and scheduling capabilities, providing enhanced visibility to confidently estimate when products will be available based on manufacturing constraints and order volumes.

Additionally, Epicor Quick Ship, which automates shipping processes such as rate shopping, shipment e-mails, and international and hazardous materials paperwork, has significantly streamlined the shipping process, enabling the company to ship directly from the Epicor ERP system.

Looking Ahead

Not only has Dexter dramatically improved its on-time delivery – a key component of customer satisfaction – it now has the capabilities to support a company twice its size, which is vital as the company has experienced extensive growth over the past few years. Additionally, it now has world-class capabilities to be at parity with its market-leading aerospace and top medical device customers.

“The remarkable thing is that this project was started and delivered in a year during the COVID-19 pandemic. We expect to have some serious business coming our way as the recovery takes shape,” Berlin said. “The systems we have installed this year will enable us to do the things that we need to do when the market turns around.”

About Encompass

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