

# JOHNSON PLASTICS

One of the world's largest suppliers of engraving materials, Johnson Plastics, was looking for a way to stay ahead of the competition.

## CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

In order to leave a lasting impression on customers, executives at Johnson knew that fulfilling its promise of next-day shipping had to be priority number one. However, operating on an outdated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system was preventing the company from making good on its word. As Johnson continued to grow, it turned to VAI for the software and information technology (IT) support needed to integrate the company's entire multi-warehouse operation.

### Customer Profile

Founded in 1970, Johnson Plastics, a family-owned company, distributes plastic engraving materials, sign supplies and products for personalization throughout the U.S. and to over 40 countries worldwide. Today, the business owns and operates eight warehouse facilities in Arizona, California, Georgia,

Illinois, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio and Texas. Johnson serves over 20,000 customers in the engravable signs and sublimation industry, including hotels, construction and government and many small local sign shops.

### Problem-Context

Johnson was operating on an outdated ERP system that no longer fit its growing business needs. With a burgeoning customer base, the company required a software vendor that could easily implement its products and merge each of the Johnson warehouse facilities into one seamless operation, visible on a single computer screen.

Before VAI, communication between Johnson's numerous warehouse operations was complicated, which created slow order response times, causing disruptions in customer service.

Because Johnson stocks product in various warehouse facilities, often times, the distributor must coordinate shipping for the entire order from separate warehouses—a complex and cumbersome process without the right software solution.

### Objectives

Excellent customer service is what sets Johnson apart from its biggest competitors. As such, the ability to deliver products quickly and correctly was among the company's chief concern in purchasing a new system. Johnson needed a way for staff, no matter which warehouse facility they were based out of, to easily locate and track product, and get it shipped to customers on time. A software product with this capability is what initially attracted Johnson to VAI.

### Finding the Right Partner

After a year of research to pinpoint



exactly what it was looking for in a potential software vendor, Johnson found everything it needed—and more—with VAI and its powerful product, S2K Enterprise for Distribution. Johnson needed the highest level of customer service available and the right tools to help manage its supply chain, enterprise resources and customer relationships. Since Johnson preferred a software vendor that could also serve as an outsourced IT department and respond quickly to any technical needs that might occur, VAI was the perfect choice, given that the company came equipped and ready to meet those requirements.

#### **Solution- Process**

VAI's experienced staff goes to great lengths to completely understand the right blend of tools and software applications needed to get every client up and running—and Johnson was no different.

Enterprise software implementations—since they touch every aspect of a business—can be a challenging and time-consuming process, but VAI worked closely with Johnson to ensure a successful transition from its old system to S2K, which was installed for the company in 2003. During the implementation, VAI worked systematically with the Johnson staff and executives

to integrate themselves into every aspect of the conversion.

#### **Using the Solution to Solve the Problem**

S2K was able to meet Johnson's precise warehousing needs, and it corrected the distributor's biggest source of inaccuracy—locating products in the warehouse and shipping them in a timely manner, which has enabled Johnson to maintain the highest level of customer service and satisfaction. S2K also provided Johnson with support and integration for all of the company's software applications including its Web site, credit card, fax and email server. In addition, S2K worked easily with UPS WorldShip™, the system that Johnson uses to ship orders—automatically recording shipping prices and weight, sending the information automatically to UPS, and adjusting Johnson's records in one fluid process.

#### **Evaluation- Results and Benefits**

As already noted, the most significant benefit for Johnson is the ability to fulfill a single order from multiple warehouse locations, an immense task made easier after the addition of VAI's S2K Enterprise for Distribution. Since S2K provides an integrated user interface, the customer service department is able to ship orders from disparate warehouses and

adjust stock levels automatically and in real-time—with 100 percent accuracy. Viewing the entire business operation on a single computer screen drastically reduces order fulfillment delays that were a common problem with the company's old system.

That said, the order entry module required significant customization because of the way Johnson runs its business—stocking and shipping merchandise from multiple warehouses—the company needed a higher level of visibility. Notably, many of these order entry features now come standard in the S2K for Distribution package.

Additionally, almost 10 percent of the call center workload has been redistributed to the Johnson Plastics Storefront where customers can enter orders, track shipments and review account status by simply accessing a portal on the Johnson Plastics' Web site.

Rich VanHelden, Project Manager, VAI, said, "Johnson Plastics needed a major expansion of timely information to run its entire operation, and VAI helped them get there. With S2K, Johnson is better able to serve its customers, which has always been the company's top priority. In addition, the advanced reporting options available with S2K have equipped



Johnson with the knowledge to address any business concerns that crop up—now or in the future.”

**Customer Quote**

Ron Caucutt, Business Analyst,  
Johnson Plastics, stated,

“We’ve doubled our sales since implementing VAI’s S2K. Not only have we added another location, but we are also shipping 40 to 50 percent more orders with the same amount of people, while continuing to increase our customer service

levels. The VAI team has access to numerous resources and their response time is exceptional. I was very impressed with how well VAI handled our implementation.”

