



The Company

Established in 1948, Acme Tools is a family-owned business and a premier retailer of tools and equipment with nine locations throughout North Dakota, Minnesota, and Iowa. Acme provides sales, repair, and rental services to the contractor, woodworker, and do-it-yourselfer. The company has 60 outside sales representatives focusing in nine states, and it employs over 300 people.

Established
1948

Located
Stamford, Connecticut

Industry
Retailer, Tools and Equipment

Requirements
Retail POS, Service & Repair, Mobile, CRM, Demand Planning, WMS, eCommerce

The Solution

Not all the approximately 100,000 SKUs that Acme currently has access to can be stocked at 100,000 SKUs. For the business, being visible is crucial. Maintaining customer assistance requires the use of VAI's Retail Point-of-Sale (POS) application. In addition to using POS to tally sales, they may monitor company-wide inventory using the software and determine whether to ship directly from another site to a client or move it from one location to another to meet their demands. This saves them from having to leave the sales floor or the application to continue working productively at their current station.

VAI brought in service and repair to help Acme keep the products they sell in good working order. They also have warranty authorization, which was a great feature with S2K, according to Acme's information services manager, Dean Spicer. "We have full-service tax in place in addition to a warranty mechanism that follows it back to the vendor if the warranty repair is not present. If you bring in a product, it becomes a process. After checking them in and keeping an eye on the tool's whereabouts in the servicing department, we deliver the tool to the customer so they can get back to the job and continue working."

With 60 salespeople traveling in trucks, Acme implemented VAI's Mobile solution to increase the productivity of these territory outside salesmen. The Acme team used laptops that run VAI and had data cards installed. This allows their outside team to view price, inventory, and client credit in real-time. If they have the merchandise on their truck, they can deliver it to the customer along with an invoice after entering the order in the field.

They can enter real-time quotes and inventories using the VAI mobile app. Before this, Acme occasionally did not make a sale if a buyer requested something, and they weren't sure if they had the item in stock. Spicer went on, "The consumer needs to know that they will receive their product on schedule. Thus, accurate, real-time information is fantastic. No one is going to sell it out from under you, and they can ensure that they retain that level of customer satisfaction. You place the order, it assigns the inventory, and a pick ticket is generated."

Additionally, Acme is utilizing VAI's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software. Spicer stated, "The CRM is good from a process perspective." Everything is combined into one. Without ever leaving the application, you may complete your quote, close the deal, and



The Solution continued:

take care of your customer from start to finish. It's everything right there; you don't need to learn multiple applications."

Acme uses VAI's Demand Planning software at their Grand Forks location to consolidate most of their purchasing. Using VAI, Acme's corporate purchasers can evaluate the recommendations and determine whether their Plymouth, Minnesota site can fulfill a full order. Without returning the item to the distribution center, they drop ship it is using the solution. If they have too much of something and need to return it to the distribution center to avoid paying freight, they might decide to divide it among the other nine sites. The solution has been quite helpful in giving the Acme team flexibility to consider their suggestions and make decisions.

Acme decided to employ radio frequency handheld

technology in conjunction with VAI's Warehouse Management system (WMS) system, which has had a significant positive impact on their warehouse team's productivity. Acme relied on paper-based records prior to VAI's WMS installation, which required time and resources. RF guns are being used by the Acme team for shipping, bin allocation, picking, and scanning. Accuracy and overall efficiency have increased significantly using VAI WMS.

Additionally, Acme is using VAI's eCommerce software on IBM WebSphere. Acme's real-time pricing and inventory are made possible by this integration, allowing customers to know if a product is in stock when they place an online order.

Additional mobile and WMS capabilities are part of Acme's future with VAI to further enhance Acme's procedures. Spicer concluded, saying, "Acme is very excited about looking for that cooperative type of development to move both companies into the future and a long-term relationship with VAI."

The Results

Acme can now check out customers considerably more quickly than they could in the past thanks to the advantages of the VAI's S2K ERP solution. One of the main goals they had in mind was to speed up the process of getting clients out the door, which took too long prior to implementing the VAI. With the help of VAI's S2K ERP solution, they can quickly and effectively check the person out, get them moving, and get them to the job site.

Since the launch, Acme Tools Company has been using VAI's ERP software to:

- Ensure consumers know they will receive their product on schedule
- Complete quotes, close deals, and take care of customers without leaving one CRM tool
- Make suggestions decisions with flexibility
- Guarantee products are in stock when customers place an order
- Check out customers quickly and efficiently

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- Dean Spicer, Information Systems Manager, Acme Tools Company