Business challenge

Rapid delivery of the right products to help customers maintain their vehicles is critical for Gamma Powersports. However, tracking over 38,000 items using manual processes was becoming unsustainable.

Transformation

By replacing spreadsheets with a mobile-enabled ERP and analytics platform, Gamma Powersports has automated its warehouse and inventory management processes, and gained new insight into sales trends.

Adrian Bisson,
IT Director,
Gamma Powersports

Business benefits:

Faster
fill-rate for orders helps accelerate shipping and meet urgent customer needs

15%
increase in inventory accuracy streamlines warehouse operations and saves time

Boosts
profitability by enabling demand-driven purchasing based on sales trend analysis

Gamma Powersports
Revolutionizing warehouse operations to enable faster deliveries to customers

Founded in 1972, Gamma Powersports provides wholesale parts and accessories for power sports equipment, including snowmobiles, motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). Located in Orillia, Canada, the company distributes more than 38,000 items and supplies dealers throughout Canada.

"New insight into year-on-year trends helps us align our purchasing with customer demand."

Adrian Bisson, IT Director, Gamma Powersports

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Fast, reliable delivery to customers

Delivering top-quality products and services at an affordable price is the key to keeping customers coming back for more. That's why Gamma Powersports, a company that provides wholesale parts and accessories for power sports equipment to dealers across Canada, focuses on providing fast, reliable deliveries to its customers.

Adrian Bisson, IT Director at Gamma Powersports, explains: "The vast majority of our customers are repair shops and retailers. They need to receive our products on time to deliver good service to their own customers, who are keen to get their vehicles up and running as soon as possible."

For years, Gamma Powersports had relied on spreadsheets and other tools to help manage its warehouse operations and inventory.

This process was slow, and it was easy for the warehouse team to make mistakes – which meant that products could get misplaced. At the same time, the company's product portfolio was growing rapidly: with over 38,000 items to track, the company recognized that the manual approach was becoming unsustainable.

"We recognized that the time and cost of managing our warehouse and inventory using spreadsheets were creeping upwards, and we couldn't afford to let the complexity impact the speed of our deliveries to customers," recalls Adrian Bisson. "We recognized that automation was the only way to manage our fast-growing business efficiently."

Finding a solution to transform the business

Gamma Powersports decided to retire its spreadsheets and deploy S2K Enterprise, an ERP system from VAI, an IBM Premier Business Partner.

"VAI S2K is designed for retailers, manufacturers and specialist industries, and VAI is helping us to configure the solution so that it aligns with our business perfectly," adds Adrian Bisson. "The VAI team is very easy to work with, and we have a great relationship with them."

As part of the project, Gamma Powersports also implemented S2K Analytics – a reporting and analysis solution built on IBM® Cognos® Express software. The whole S2K ERP landscape runs on an IBM Power® 720 Express server, leveraging the IBM i operating system with its built-in IBM DB2® database.

"The IBM Power Systems™ server offers impressive reliability," comments Adrian Bisson. "It's also the lowest maintenance server I have ever come across – if there is an issue, it can contact IBM electronically – often before I even notice that there's a problem!"

Switching to next-generation warehouse operations

The new ERP and analytics platform has transformed the way Gamma Powersports operates its warehouse.

"In the past, warehouse staff had to write down which items they had moved or picked, and then later update the spreadsheet," says Adrian Bisson. "Today, every product in our warehouse has a barcode. Using wireless mobile devices, staff can just scan the items they move – and the ERP system is updated in real time.

"As a result, we now have a clear picture of where our goods are at any given time. Our inventory accuracy has already risen 15 percent, and we expect to achieve near-perfect accuracy over time."

He continues: "Because our staff can now work so much more productively, our daily order fill-rate has increased significantly, which means we can get deliveries out to our customers faster than ever before. As our business grows, even if the volume of orders doubles, we will be able to raise our fill-rate to meet the demand.

"The wireless mobile devices also help us locate employees within our huge warehouse in real time, so we can get a better understanding of how people work. The software also helps us identify ways to reorganize the warehouse to put the most frequently chosen products in the most accessible places. On top of that, it is now much easier to train new hires, because the system automatically allocates incoming tasks to appropriate members of the warehouse team and tells them what to do next."

Improved purchasing options for customers

Order and inventory data in the S2K ERP system is managed by an IBM DB2 database, and utilized by S2K Enterprise Portal to provide an online store. Powered by IBM Websphere® Portal, the S2K Enterprise Portal enables customers to check stock levels and monitor the progress of their orders in real time. This information is available to employees too, so when a customer phones the call center, sales teams can offer relevant advice and recommendations based on the customer's purchase history.

Capturing valuable insights into the business

Adrian Bisson remarks: "By analyzing seasonal trends such as year-on-year sales, we can see how many products we are likely to sell each month or year. These insights help us purchase the right products at the right times and in the right quantities to avoid overstocking.

"We can also make better decisions about the viability of our product lines. For the first time, we can easily drill down into product families and look at each individual SKU. So, for example, if a certain product line seems to be performing well overall, but one particular style or color is not selling at all, we can we can adjust our purchasing – and our marketing – accordingly.

He concludes: "It's still early on, but the new solution is already helping us make smarter decisions about how we run our business. We look forward to expanding our use of S2K Analytics into more and more parts of our company in the future – the potential is huge."

Solution components

- VAI S2K Enterprise

- VAI S2K Sales Force

- VAI S2K Analytics

- VAI S2K Portal

- IBM® Cognos® Express

- IBM DB2®

- IBM WebSphere® Portal

- IBM i

- IBM Power® 720 Express

- IBM Business Partner VAI

Take the next step

To learn more about Gamma Powersports, please visit gammapowersports.com

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