

Business:

Industrial Supply

Company:

Reid Supply Company

Objectives:

Leverage content management for greater efficiency and profitability



SmartSearch Helps Reid Supply Company Tool Up for Efficiency

In its quest for higher efficiency, an international industrial products supplier adds industrial-strength SmartSearch to its back office tool box.

Always proactive about efficiency, Reid Supply Company continuously seeks to leverage technology. Long aware of the advantages of content management, its challenge had been finding a solution with the necessary capabilities at the right price point. In SmartSearch, value-conscious Reid Supply Company was pleased to find a very affordable solution that is a great fit for its high-volume business processes and is helping advance its environmental stewardship initiatives.

Reid Supply Company was founded by Liberty and Gloria Reid in their home in Muskegon, Michigan in 1948. Mr. Reid's vision was to stock those hard-to-get industrial products in inventory for immediate delivery. He lined up suppliers and published a 16-page catalog, which was mailed to 5,000 machine shops in the Midwest. Today, Reid Supply Company's catalog is color-coded for easy indexing and has over 870 pages of content. Customers can also search for products using ReidSupply.com, the company's newly enhanced and fully searchable e-commerce Web site. Reid Supply Company sells to customers in all 50 states in the U.S. and over 40 countries around the world.

"We have a reputation for going the extra mile for our customers," said Stephen Holt, controller of Reid Supply Company. "If a customer needs a product we don't stock, we try to find it for them. If necessary, we can modify our products to meet their exact requirements. Another thing we pride ourselves on," Holt said, "is leveraging new technologies to be as efficient as possible. Because SmartSearch offered the features we needed at a very attractive price point, we

were able to take this exciting new technology and deploy it within our accounting department, where we are using it to manage the thousands of vendor invoices we receive each month."

Holt views SmartSearch as an efficiency multiplier, boosting Reid Supply Company's smoothly flowing internal business processes to even higher levels. "SmartSearch helped us eliminate many of the 'touches' of our vendor invoices so they can be processed more efficiently and with greater flexibility," he explained. "Best of all, using SmartSearch means that we never have to physically touch an invoice again once it has been entered into our system. Now, when we need a stored document, retrieving it is easy and extremely fast. We estimate that SmartSearch is saving us many valuable labor hours each month, often when time is most critical."

Holt had researched content management technologies independently, but the solutions he found appeared to be designed for very large companies and were priced in the six-figure range, making them completely impractical. Eventually, however, he was introduced to SmartSearch by a respected office solutions provider serving his market area.

With SmartSearch, Reid Supply Company's accounts payable processes are now more efficient. The company receives from 50 to 100 vendor invoices every day by e-mail, fax or U.S. mail. Faxes are converted to e-mail files and paper invoices are run through a multifunction printer to capture them as PDFs. Vendors are encouraged to send their

invoices by e-mail or fax, cutting down on paper. Once captured electronically, the invoices are then imported into SmartSearch. Accounts payable specialists using dual monitors simultaneously enter invoice data into the company's ERP system and index the invoices in SmartSearch using pre-defined index fields to make the process easy and fast.

Before SmartSearch, Holt explained, storing and retrieving invoices had been frustrating and time-consuming. Paper invoices had to be periodically filed, put into banker's boxes and stored in the warehouse—a frustrating efficiency chokepoint. "When we needed an invoice," Holt recalled, "I would have to walk upstairs, find the box and pull it out, dig through it, use the paperwork and then remember to return the invoice to the right place. Now I don't have to do that ever again!"

"Documents stored in SmartSearch are backed up electronically each day so they can never be damaged, destroyed or lost," Holt continued. "In addition, SmartSearch has given us a way to track expenses across departments by project number, an important capability we did not have with our existing ERP system. And because it completely eliminates the need to store many thousands of paper records each year, SmartSearch is also helping us meet our 'Reid Green' environmental objectives."

Only three months after implementing SmartSearch, Holt said he believes it may be saving as many as 30 employee hours each month, including senior executives. Based on a thorough cost analysis, Holt had conservatively estimated the

solution would pay for itself in about 12 months. Quite satisfied with its performance, Reid Supply Company soon began using SmartSearch to manage customer tax exemption forms and credit information, plus hard-to-track miscellaneous cash income, and was looking seriously at deploying SmartSearch for human resources and internal documentation applications as well.

"We have been very pleased," Holt concluded. "I would highly recommend SmartSearch to those seeking an affordable and reliable content management solution and would strongly encourage them to see a demonstration of this impressive solution."

About Square 9 Softworks

Square 9 Softworks is a leading developer of innovative, business-centric software solutions including the award-winning SmartSearch Content Management Suite. Dedicated to making content management available to organizations of all sizes, Square 9 Softworks designs solutions built on open architecture and cutting-edge technologies that drive efficiency and productivity across all business applications.

Through decades of experience with content management technologies in business enterprises of all kinds, Square 9 Softworks has acquired a thorough understanding of

document-driven business processes. Intensely customer-focused and highly responsive, the company delivers effective, value-driven solutions and has achieved a reputation for excellence in meeting the rapidly evolving needs of its customers.

Square 9 Softworks distributes its solutions exclusively through a network of highly skilled channel partners from its corporate office in New Haven, Connecticut. For further information, visit www.square-9.com