

HOLMES PLUMBING AND HEATING SUPPLY DROPS “OLD SCHOOL” PROCESSES FOR “NEW SCHOOL” ERP TECHNOLOGY

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CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

Company Facts:

- Location: Kearney, NE
- Industries: PHCP & HVAC
- Previous Provider: Red Wing
- Website: holmessupply.com
- Buying Groups: BLUE HAWK, LPG

Features Highlighted:

- Fully integrated CRM
- Accounting
- Inform eCommerce
- Paperless Workflows

Benefits Gained:

- Top-notch customer service
- Paperless workflows
- Labor savings
- Increased sales

To thrive in the plumbing and heating supply business for more than 50 years, you can't be complacent. You must stay on top of technology and make sure you're providing your customers with best-in-class solutions at competitive prices. Holmes Plumbing and Heating Supply Company has done just that by leveraging Inform ERP Software.

Jeff Johnson, General Manager of Holmes Plumbing and Heating Supply Company, openly admits that he's a little bit “old-school” when it comes to how he conducts business. Though you might still see him taking meeting notes with a pen and paper, that doesn't stop him from pushing his team to stay up-to-date on the latest technology. Jeff knows that in order to stay competitive, the type of technology you use can make a big difference between a good year and closing the doors.

“If you want to be successful in this business, you can't sit back and rest on your laurels,” he said. “You have to be forward thinking. But you also need to put systems in place that are easy for people to use—or they won't use it.”

Buying Group Members Lead the Way

When it came time to implement an end-to-end ERP solution, Jeff wanted a proven product. He had heard plenty of sales pitches, but he wanted a solution that had been tested and worked in businesses similar to his own. As a member of several buying groups, including BLUE HAWK and LPG, he looked to fellow member businesses to see what they were using.

“When we were evaluating ERP platforms, we relied heavily upon the feedback and experiences from other members in our buying groups,” Jeff said. “The best of the best (in my opinion) was using DDI, and for that reason alone, we knew we had to take a look.”

Jeff met with one of DDI's seasoned sales experts to better understand the system's full capabilities. It didn't take long for him to realize how much efficiency and growth his operations could experience by implementing Inform.

"Our solutions expert made us feel comfortable immediately," said Johnson. "There was nothing he promised that we didn't get—no hidden fees or surprises. I can't imagine us ever switching away from Inform."

Streamlining Internal Processes

True to the testimonials of their fellow buying group members, Johnson and the entire team at Holmes Plumbing and Heating Supply have only positive feedback to share about their experience with Inform.

"I just love DDI and the Inform system," said Johnson. "We have nothing but good things to say. It's been amazing since we got it. It was everything we were told it was and more."

Inform's robust inventory control and accounting capabilities have helped Holmes to reduce labor in the accounting department, providing the distributor with the ability to reallocate staff to other areas of focus. Training staff on new job responsibilities is pretty seamless as well, due to Inform's intuitive navigation.

"There's so much data I can tap into to run my business," said Johnson. Kayla Miller, Accounting & IT Specialist, agrees. From Inform's 'Stock Transfer Entry and Receiving' feature to 'Projected Purchase Order' capabilities, the system has helped Holmes eliminate redundant processes and provide easy analysis of ongoing project demand, lead time and inventory counts. "Switching to Inform was one of the best decisions the company ever made. We have so much more control over inventory and accounting than what we had before," adds Miller.

In addition to streamlining accounting and purchasing processes, using eDocs helps substantially reduce the amount of paper and

printing required. The paperless and file free workflows allow employees to maintain electronic records for customer, product and vendor information.

Inform has also given Holmes the ability to email invoices, customer statements and any other communication directly to the customer. Sales and purchase orders can also be easily generated with the click of the button—improving efficiency and reducing costs associated with paper and printing supplies.

Driving Online Sales

Holmes uses DDI's Inform eCommerce to display product images, specs, details and pricing to the customer. The information displayed is specific to the user searching the site, making customer re-ordering seamless. "Each month I see how we steadily increase sales through our eCommerce storefront," says Jeff.

Johnson says he's seen other ERP systems that are extremely difficult to manage and update. This creates issues down the road because users don't stay on top of the technology, limiting its functionality.

"I stay up to date with all of the latest versions of Inform. When we update, we take a step back for a week or so to learn about those new features and where they are in the software. Then we catch up quickly and realize 'WOW! We just got all this?' We absolutely love DDI's Inform ERP for our business."

Despite being a little bit "old-school," Johnson gives DDI System his stamp of approval. "For anyone considering a modern day ERP that's intuitive and easy to learn, I would highly recommend you take a look at DDI System because you will not be sorry."



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DDI System's Inform ERP distribution management software is a leading, industry-specific solution for wholesale suppliers. Inform ERP optimizes distribution operations, creates lean inventories, strengthens financials and propels sales to continually exceed performance goals—all while delivering an exceptional client experience unmatched by any other software provider.

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