



# Case Study: Thruway Fasteners



## Thruway Fasteners Gains Visibility into Supply Chain Performance with Tribridge and Microsoft Dynamics® GP

### BUSINESS SITUATION

#### Growing Pains

As Thruway Fasteners continues to grow, managing their entire supply chain – suppliers through customers, retrieving meaningful data out of their ERP system and creating consistent business processes across multiple locations became an increasing challenge.

“We were using an industry-specific ERP system designed for distributors,” said Craig Stroh, Thruway Fastener’s IT Manager. “Unfortunately, we felt we had pushed our operating system to its limit with the combination of our continued growth of products and valued-added services that we provide to our customers. Concurrently, we approached a point of limited return regarding additional upgrades and program modifications. It was evident that the time had come to explore other options that would allow us to run all areas of our business with more visibility and create opportunities for increased productivity.”

#### Requirements for Change

Thruway Fasteners formed an internal evaluation team with representation from various branches and departments to create an extensive list of software features required across the organization. This team also was developed to ensure consistent business processes were applied among the seven branches.

“We came up with a spreadsheet that included nearly 4,000 requirements,” said Craig. “An RFP was created and sent to over 20 potential suppliers. From the RFP results, the field was cut to five, who then participated in the RFQ and capabilities/presentation phase of the process. From this diligent process, the team and management selected Microsoft Dynamics GP.” While the software was an important decision, Craig knew the key to success would be the relationship with the implementation team and ongoing service and support. Microsoft recommended Tribridge.

“There was something about Tribridge that put them far beyond the other companies we interviewed,” said Craig. “They were extremely confident, encouraged us to talk to their other clients for references and engaged with us in a positive selling experience. Most importantly, they understood the concerns that we had with the pending implementation.” Craig added, “They confirmed that, although many of our challenges would be unique, Tribridge’s knowledge and experience would be of great value to a successful implementation.”

**SOLUTION:** Microsoft Dynamics® GP

### ABOUT THRUWAY FASTENERS



Thruway Fasteners, Inc. is a fastener and “C” class commodity distributor direct to manufacturers, in business since 1958. A value-added service provider specializing in vendor managed inventory and commodity management, Thruway Fasteners has built a successful business around one key element – relationships. The ability to create and maintain strong business relationships with both suppliers and customers is fundamental for the value-added distributor of fasteners, machined parts and additional commodities. Headquartered in North Tonawanda, NY, Thruway Fasteners has 170 employees and manages more than 50,000 items from their seven branch locations in New York, Pennsylvania and Georgia.

By using Microsoft Dynamics GP and partnering with Tribridge, we have been able to ensure standardization and automate many of our business processes.



We help our customers become more productive, profitable, competitive and secure.



## SOLUTION

Thruway Fasteners went against the grain by selecting a non-industry specific system. "We felt this decision was a competitive advantage and differentiator for our business," said Craig. "We leveraged Tribridge's diverse experience of helping companies in different industries to think about things differently and be more successful."

During the implementation, Tribridge migrated master and historical data from the old system to Dynamics GP, along with a significant number of accounts payable and receivable invoices, which were vital for trend reporting. "Tribridge trained key people at the corporate level and then we trained each branch," said Craig. "As a result, we built a training center where we now hold regular classes for all branches. This gives our employees access to learning opportunities that help them be more efficient."

## BENEFITS

### Vendor Visibility

"Our supply chain is the lifeblood of our business," said Craig. "We now have tremendous visibility into the service our vendors provide us. We are stratifying our vendors based on a performance report Tribridge created. We can go to the vendors who meet shipping and fulfillment deadlines with fewer defects and do more business with them." This allows Thruway Fasteners to maintain their competitive edge and ensure the lowest total cost possible from their vendors.

### Proactive Customer Service

On the customer side of the supply chain, Thruway Fasteners can access more data to better analyze their relationships with clients. "If we fail to meet one of our customer's various requirements, either from a delivery, service, or quality standpoint, we can now use the system to identify the root cause of the problem and quickly make the necessary adjustments. For example, we may experience an unanticipated change in vendor lead time, or our customers' demands are driven by a spike in usage and unplanned orders," said Craig. "We have the ability to anticipate, rather than react. We can also view a customer's order status at any time. Our previous system did not provide real-time data to determine the status of our orders and work flow. Microsoft Dynamics GP allows us to be more responsive to customer requests."

### Improved Lot Traceability

Thruway Fasteners also has experienced improvement in the ability to track lot information from purchase to distribution. "We are fortunate to have a varying customer base, tied to a wide range of market segments," said Craig. "For many of our customers and their applications, lot traceability is extremely important and prompt access to this data is a requirement." With Microsoft Dynamics GP, this information is available with a few clicks of the mouse.

### Automation of Business Processes

Tribridge created an executive summary report that is automatically created daily and emailed to the executive team. The report is a high-level view of expenses and receipts. "We used to create this report off line, which took one to two hours each day," said Craig. "Now the process happens automatically."

"By using Microsoft Dynamics GP and partnering with Tribridge, we have been able to ensure standardization and automate many of our business processes. This allows for easier consolidations and a complete view of our supply chain. We have an enormous amount of information that we never had access to before. This helps us make better business decisions and provide a higher level of service to our customers."

Next, Tribridge will help Thruway Fasteners implement the use of wireless handheld scanners for the sales team, followed by an integrated quality control system and document management system. "We definitely made the right choice with Tribridge," said Craig. "We were looking for a long-term relationship that was an extension of organization, rather than just a software provider and implementer. Tribridge has met our vision."

**SOLUTION:** Microsoft Dynamics® GP

## SOLUTION HIGHLIGHTS

- Microsoft SQL Server
- Reporting Services
- Microsoft FRx
- Commissions Management
- Credit Card Encryption
- Material Control & Auditing
- Custom Developed Software
- Co-location Hosting

## THE RESULTS

- Improved visibility into vendor service
- Better analysis of client relationships
- Greater ability to anticipate orders
- Increased lot traceability
- Automation of daily reports
- Improved customer service

## CONTACT TRIBRIDGE

Find out how Tribridge can help you simplify your business.

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