

Aall American Fasteners Uses Technology to Increase Customer Loyalty

Kim and Mark Tenenbaum purchased Aall American Fasteners in 1998. At that time, the company was a fastener distributor focused primarily on the military end of the spectrum. They ran the business out of a small warehouse in West Berlin, New Jersey. The company began with two individuals focused on success, and a company philosophy of providing a quality product at the highest possible level of customer service. Partner with your customers, their success is your success. This philosophy remains true today.

Fire Forces Move

Within a year, the company had grown to four employees, and all was going well. Then one evening, Mark's brother Michael saw their warehouse burning on the nightly news. The fire had started in an adjoining warehouse and soon spread to theirs, leaving nearly everything unsalvageable. While struggling to maintain a high level of customer service throughout, the company, moved to a new, larger warehouse in Cinnaminson, New Jersey.

The move actually turned out to benefit Aall American. The new location is only 10 minutes from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and placed them right in the middle of a very competitive fastener market.

Over the next couple of years, the business expanded further, and Aall American continued to add more employees. They were quickly outgrowing the new space. Given their success at the current location, they decided to stay local and move just one block away. This new warehouse was twice the size in both office and warehouse space, giving an ample amount of room for new staff and inventory, or so they thought. In the past year, they have expanded further, buying the adjoining warehouse and office space.

Focus on Customer Service

All of this growth in such a short time could have caused some major problems along the way, but the dedicated staff stayed focused on customer service, which fueled more growth. It became increasingly apparent that the current computer system could not keep up to support the business. Melissa Gant, Manager of Operations, was charged with finding a new computer system that would be able to handle the current growth and lead the company into the future. After an extensive search, Melissa

identified The BUSINESS EDGE by Computer Insights as the best solution. Aall American purchased The BUSINESS EDGE at the right stage in their growth, and it would soon prove to be very beneficial.

The BUSINESS EDGE

As Aall American was taking on more customers and hiring more employees, The BUSINESS EDGE gave them the foundation they needed to encounter the rapid growth head on. The software gave them a consistent structure for all their employees to follow. With everyone on the same platform, the uniformity of the software and system allowed for easier management. The BUSINESS EDGE is also very user friendly, which allowed the new staff to pick up the basics of the program very quickly.

The structured software extends to all sides of the business. The BUSINESS EDGE has features that benefit all departments involved in the day-to-day operations. There are purchasing reports, shipping schedules, and receiving documents that are printed or reviewed on the screen every day. Mark Tenenbaum, Vice President, said, "This information has become critical in the everyday management of Aall American, and we would be at a loss without it." All the employees agree.

Mark Stated, "To the customer, internal software is invisible most of the time. However the capabilities of The BUSINESS EDGE make its benefits very apparent. The immediate availability of information makes customer service easy. When did the customer last purchase that part; how many, at what price; how many did they buy in the last year; no the last two years. Everything you need is at your fingertips. Everyone's time is important, and customer questions are answered right then and there."

Both Military and Commercial

With the experienced employees that were coming on board, the company saw their mix of customers changing from mainly military to OEMs and more commercial fasteners. This evolution included a new focus on inventory management solutions. Chuck Renner, Director of Sales, joined the Aall American team in 2001. Before joining Aall American, Chuck spent over 5 years with a large Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) fastener distributor. The VMI concept worked very well with the companies' high level of customer service and partnering approach. Aall American



The professional staff at Aall American stands ready to serve their customers.

helps their customers implement lean manufacturing principles while virtually eliminating the time they spend managing fasteners.

Aall American customizes their VMI program for each individual customer that they provide it to. They take full advantage of the Palm Pilot bar code scanners that integrate with The BUSINESS EDGE. The scanner and software make it easy to customize labels for customer bins to read and look the way the customer needs it to, but keeps it efficient for Aall American. Once an order is scanned at the customer, the VMI account manager can upload and print the order right out of The BUSINESS EDGE. This saves a great deal of time, and eliminates errors that could arise from manually recording and entering the order.

Software Handles Inventory “End to End”

This is only one side of the story. Now with over 22 VMI customers, you would think it would be tough for one purchasing person to handle it all. With the help of The BUSINESS EDGE, this is exactly what Tim Bozarth, Purchasing Manager, does on a daily basis. The BUSINESS EDGE really helps with the inventory control side of the VMI programs. The software’s reports aid in making sure Aall American always has stock on their VMI customers’ parts. The BUSINESS EDGE not only allows them to enter re-order points into the system, but also gives them the information they need to determine the proper re-order points. The integration with Excel is excellent for further analysis. This information is critical to any VMI program, and The BUSINESS EDGE allows it all to be managed more efficiently.

New Branch Seamlessly Added

The BUSINESS EDGE has proved itself beneficial to Aall American in other ways as well. In 2007, Aall American opened a new branch in York, Pennsylvania,

hiring Bill Gaffney as Branch Manager. Bill brings 36 years of fastener experience, a great reputation, and vast knowledge of the York and surrounding areas. The York area is proving itself a valuable market already in the few months that their new branch has been open.

With the addition of the York facility, Aall American found that The BUSINESS EDGE gave them the ability to integrate the two facilities within one computer system. The software has allowed the addition of the new branch to be seamless.

In addition to the integration, Aall American takes full benefit of The BUSINESS EDGE remote access feature. The outside salespeople use the remote feature on a daily basis. The remote access feature is especially beneficial to the Vendor Managed Inventory account managers who are onsite at customers. In the cases where these account managers need information from The BUSINESS EDGE; they can do so from the customer site. This helps Aall American deliver great customer service.

Mark summed it up, “Managing growth can be difficult, particularly while making sure you maintain your customer service levels. Technology doesn’t deliver great customer service,

but the right technology allows people to do just that. Aall American’s approach has always been to partner with their customers to help them achieve their business goals. Partnering with the right technology vendor to offer and accomplish more with less has helped make that possible.”

For more information contact Mr. Mark Tenenbaum, Aall American Fasteners, 2303 Garry Road Unit 1 Cinnaminson, NJ 08077, phone 877-791-4426, or visit their website www.aallamericanfasteners.com.

For information regarding The BUSINESS EDGE, contact Dennis R. Cowhey, Computer Insights by phone at 800-539-1233 or visit their website at www.ci-inc.com.



Aall American’s 45,000 square foot headquarters is conveniently located near Philadelphia.



One of Aall American’s trucks that is used to deliver to their VMI customers

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