

Thrive Technologies Case Study



Thrive Technologies Replaces E3 at General Air Service

Next Generation Demand Forecasting System Reduces Gas Distributor Inventory by 16 Percent

General Air Service is the largest independent gas and welding distributor in the state of Colorado. Established in 1969, General Air is family and employee owned. They have an impressive average employee tenure of over 16 years which helps them deliver the best service possible to their customers. They have 7 retail store locations serving the Front Range; Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, Fort Collins, Greeley, Littleton, and Pueblo.

They sell primarily to four different markets: industrial, medical, specialty and beverage.

Dedicated to helping their customers succeed, they partner with their customers using their knowledge of gas and welding products to offer consultative solutions. As part of that process, it is imperative that they keep the products and parts in stock that their customers need from them.



The Challenge

"The E3 system did not support our workflow."

Dwight Lackey
Purchasing Manager
General Air Service

To help insure that they had the proper levels of inventory of different items, they had been using a system called E3 from JDA Software. It was based on the IBM AS/400 iSeries server, and was the only application they had running on that platform.

Unfortunately, the recurring annual maintenance for the legacy green screen application was becoming burdensome when considering the E3 application, the proprietary hardware, operating system and database.

Additionally, the cost to upgrade to the current version of the JDA E3 system was too high especially when factoring in the ongoing maintenance costs for the AS/400.

Another frustrating problem was that the customer support personnel from JDA did not have the domain expertise in replenishment buying needed to be able to communicate with the users at General Air. "We just could not talk the same language" said Dwight Lackey, Purchasing Manager at General Air. "Their system did not support our workflow and when we tried to discuss it with them to get help, we were not getting anywhere."

The Solution

Harman Armstrong, the Information Technology Manager for General Air, was tasked with looking at new options. "I was really hoping to find a new system that better matched our user's inventory buying processes from a software company with really good customer support and domain expertise in replenishment buying. At the same time, we could not afford the downtime from a lengthy implementation process."

"We ended up choosing the hosted web based solution from Thrive Technologies. We were impressed by their knowledge both of the buying process as well as their technical capabilities. The system itself is very powerful and is a great fit for our business. Our users liked the clean and easy to use web based interface of the application."

"It was the smoothest software implementation we have even been through."

Harman Armstrong
IT Manager
General Air Service

"I also liked Thrive's monthly Software as a Service offering versus the software installation that their competitors offered. They were able to have our application up very quickly and I didn't have to worry about the ongoing maintenance and updates of the system."

"Finally, I called several of their existing customers before we made the final decision and all of them were very positive about their experiences with Thrive Technologies and the benefits they had received from using the system."

The Implementation

"We had a hard deadline to replace our E3 system," states Armstrong. "We needed to be live with the Thrive system in 30 days. Thrive Technologies provided very high levels of both buying knowledge and technical expertise so that we could hit our deadline. It was the smoothest software implementation we have ever been through."

The Impact

General Air Service has seen significant benefits from implementing the Thrive system.

"Overall, Thrive saves our buyers a good 90 minutes a day over the E3 system," says Lackey. "Not only is the time a huge savings, the ease of the system to work in is also a big plus. Stress and frustration is part of any job, and Thrive helps alleviate much of that stress. It is very easy to work in and to navigate from one vendor or location to the next. In addition, over the past 15 months, Thrive has helped us reduce inventory by 16%."

"Thrive saves us 90 minutes a day over E3...In addition, Thrive has helped us reduce inventory by 16%."

Dwight Lackey
Purchasing Manager
General Air Service

"We were able to accomplish this with a minimal amount of loss of service or stock out," states Lackey.

"Thrive's support is very knowledgeable and responsive. We have a system that continues to be upgraded with the latest features, and are not stuck with a system that will get outdated and then have to consider an expensive upgrade in a couple years."

"For any other E3 customers who are looking at options, we highly recommend the system from Thrive Technologies."

About Thrive Technologies Inc.

Thrive Technologies is a leading provider of web-based demand forecasting and inventory replenishment software for distribution intensive companies. Thrive's award winning system have provided over 80 companies the ability to set strategic customer service and inventory profit goals, which the software translates into optimized daily vendor line buys. Thrive's browser-based software is easy to use, and integrates quickly to existing enterprise software. Thrive's implementation staff has strong domain expertise in the area of advanced replenishment buying for distributors. For more information, visit Thrive on the Web at www.thrivetech.com.

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