



Epicor Success Story

Calibre Equipment

Production Planning Hits the Floor

Company Facts

- ▶ Location: New Zealand
- ▶ Industry: Engineering and construction
- ▶ Website: <http://calibre-equipment.com/>



Success Highlights

Challenges

- ▶ Tidy up shop floor controls and production planning
- ▶ Improve customer service levels through more accurate delivery timeframes
- ▶ Minimise IT infrastructure and overhead

Solution

- ▶ Epicor Cloud ERP

Benefits

- ▶ Accurate inventory and order status
- ▶ Integrated production planning, through to customer delivery
- ▶ Satellite offices easily set up and information shared

Recently rebranded from JB Attachments, Calibre Equipment manufactures attachments for excavators with a range of products including quick connection and release couplers and devices allowing attachments to tilt.

Jenna Smolenski is the chief operating officer in this business of heavy lifting, steel dust, welding, and plasma cutting. She and managing director Graham Smolenski are focused on delivering value to Calibre customers.

Jenna Smolenski's thinking is centred on what is important for customers—the operators in the field. "Downtime is expensive in their industry—it's all time-sensitive, so lead time in getting new equipment to them working is really important," she says.

Historically, the business has had information gaps between inventory and production that meant it couldn't always keep customers informed with accurate information. Customer orders also competed with maintaining an inventory of spare parts, and the production planning process struggled to reflect the correct priority on jobs.

To address this, Calibre implemented the Epicor enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution, including production planning and financial processes. The ERP system is an important tool in the planning required to build each component. Smolenski says, "The Epicor ERP solution allows us to operate efficiently in various divisions—in particular, its planning and production capability allow us to organise capacity through the shop floor."



Smolenski adds that this is helped by other features such as perpetual real-time inventory tied in with manufacturing and invoicing. With this information flowing through the entire system, from production to finance, timely reports make for informed decision-making to support business growth.

With 120 staff across four sites, and around NZ\$20 million revenue, a single source of the truth and accurate inventory and order tracking are vital to both an efficient operation and servicing the demands of OEM and end-user customers.

Growth through quality

“We are able to maintain quality better as the process is now less haphazard, the planners know what is in the pipeline, and can make sure we have the correct materials in inventory—all the way from ordering the right quantities of raw steel to always having stocks of the urgent spares that need to go out to a job,” says Smolenski.

Quality is more than a differentiator for Calibre. It is key to business growth as foreign products are readily available at prices that look attractive on paper. “We know operators have a choice, so they need to have trust in both our finished product and in us to do what we say we’re going to do,” says Smolenski.

Out on the shop floor, production manager Charles Meyer is the person tracking the job sheets (paper and steel) through the process and making sure any exceptions are quickly reflected in the Epicor ERP system. “We can optimise steel utilisation using the

integrated CAD and plasma cutting machinery, but what Epicor does is look after the big picture—what is being cut and why.”

The reality of the process is made stark on a tour of the facility. This is not a linear automobile production line with raw materials incrementally building a finished product. Rather, individual workstations produce seemingly random components (sub-assemblies) that are brought together in the assembly process with production configured around each machine’s capacity and set-up time.

“There are two main streams of production—inventory and customer orders. Jobs often need to be prioritised through the process, so a central control point to handle that is crucial. Quality is obviously one of our main concerns. Quality gets tracked throughout the cycle of each product so every single job that goes through gets monitored and measured according to customer specifications and drawings,” says Meyer.

Cloud for a distributed workforce

Smolenski explains the influence a distributed workforce had on Calibre selecting the Epicor Cloud ERP solution. “It has advantages for us in that there’s a lower burden on our internal IT systems and hardware required. Every time we set up an office, we can tap into the cloud-hosted environment from anywhere and allow them to be on the ball with all the information at their fingertips,” she says.

About Epicor

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