



## Epicor Success Story

# ACE Clearwater Enterprises

### Company Facts

- ▶ Location: Torrance, California
- ▶ Industry: Sheet Metal Fabricating
- ▶ Number of Employees: 180

### Success Highlights

#### Challenges

- ▶ Antiquated ERP system could not provide access to timely information to keep up with accelerated pace of manufacturing business

#### Solution

- ▶ Epicor Vantage
- ▶ Flexible, all-in-one solution that gathers data and distributes it throughout the company in real time

#### Benefits

- ▶ Better, faster decision making through improved visibility
- ▶ User-friendly installation, upgrades, and maintenance
- ▶ Improved supply chain management
- ▶ Reduced dependence on paperwork



ACE Clearwater Enterprises (ACE) is a family-owned manufacturer of sheet metal products, specializing in complex formed and welded assemblies for the aerospace, automotive, and power-generation industries. Notable customers include Honeywell, Lockheed Martin, General Electric, Bell Helicopter, Boeing, and several foreign aerospace companies.

Prior to Vantage, ACE used a legacy UNIX®-based ERP system with other databases running in the background. Lum says this often caused user problems and wasted time transferring data between applications. And because it was a “store and forward” system, the data was not real time.

Lum says customers are expecting faster turnaround times every year. Through vertical integration, ACE streamlined its production cycle by bringing new equipment and processes in-house. But that was just the beginning.

ACE quickly realized they needed a flexible, integrated system that could aggregate and distribute real-time data to users across the entire company for analysis and decision making. It also had to fit ACE’s business environment and offer user-friendly installation, upgrades and maintenance, and a lower total cost of ownership and simpler overall system administration.

Lum said the excellent reputation of Epicor was also important. “We knew Epicor would stand behind its product and continue to implement new



features and innovations.” Epicor Vantage 8.0, the industry’s first leading manufacturing software solution based on a 100-percent service-oriented architecture (SOA), best satisfied ACE’s criteria.

## Smooth Implementation

To plan the implementation, eight three-person process teams were formed, including operations, purchasing, contracts, and accounting. Training was conducted at all three facilities on a team-by-team basis.

Converting the databases was the most time consuming step. ACE’s programmer coordinated the data transfer with team leads and worked with an Epicor consultant to fine-tune configurations within Vantage. In the week before conversion, the teams inventoried and collected open orders from the shop floors. System data was downloaded on Wednesday, verified on Thursday, and uploaded into the new Vantage system on the Friday before the Memorial Day weekend.

Teams worked on Saturday and Sunday to recreate all open orders, completing the conversion process by Sunday afternoon and leaving Memorial Day free for parades and barbecues. On Tuesday morning, ACE was off and running on Vantage 8.

## User-Friendly and Responsive

“We’ve found Vantage 8 to be easy to learn and very user friendly,” notes Lum, adding that the applications and clients are easy to install, upgrade, and maintain. Using ACE’s existing Microsoft® Windows® platform and TCP/IP infrastructure eliminates the need for propriety hardware and infrastructure.

“Vantage 8.0 is a solid product, built on the Microsoft .NET platform from the ground up—it’s very responsive,” says Lum.

“Very responsive” is also how Lum describes the Epicor tech support. “They are the best I’ve experienced in the industry.” ACE uses Vantage throughout the entire company, with 50 users and 20 bar code sessions.

Because Vantage is based on the .NET platform, ACE users now share information across applications with analytical tools, which Lum calls “a tremendous time saving benefit.” Reports can be easily modified and special business activity queries (BAQ) written to deliver real-time data to ACE users. For ACE’s purchasing staff, Lum says Vantage reports and BAQs give them critical information and optimal visibility in managing the company’s supply chain.

## Less Paper Pushing, More Visibility

The integrated Vantage solution means less paper pushing, a goal ACE first established five years ago. For example, Vantage gives ACE online, real-time visibility of contract review requirements for ISO quality certification. Previously, paper was shuffled between separate tracking systems and databases. Furthermore, quality documentation is now incorporated directly into Vantage, rather than ACE personnel recording bad parts on separate paper forms.

Lum says part traceability is very important to ACE customers, particularly in the aerospace industry. “The lot-tracing capabilities within Vantage help accelerate that process.”

“Customers today also want immediate visibility on the status of their orders—they don’t want to wait,” Lum says. ACE plans to offer its customers Web-interface capabilities in the near future, through the Vantage Web service capabilities. States Lum, “This will be another competitive advantage.”



## About Epicor

Epicor Software Corporation drives business growth. We provide flexible, industry-specific software that is designed around the needs of our manufacturing, distribution, retail, and service industry customers. More than 40 years of experience with our customers' unique business processes and operational requirements is built into every solution—in the cloud, hosted, or on premises. With a deep understanding of your industry, Epicor solutions spur growth while managing complexity. The result is powerful solutions that free your resources so you can grow your business. For more information, [connect with Epicor](#) or visit [www.epicor.com](http://www.epicor.com).



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