Dyke Industries Chooses Ponderosa to Handle the Complexities of Its Businesses

Dyke Industries, Inc. is a family owned company that has served the Southeast U.S. as a wholesale distributor of a broad line of building materials, millwork and related products since 1866. The present-day company, incorporated in 1942, is the successor to two millwork manufacturing companies, Dyke Bros., which was established in Fort Smith, Arkansas in 1870, and Cole Manufacturing Company, which was established in Memphis, Tennessee in 1866.

Dyke provides a full complement of hardware, doors, windows, and trim and maintains an inventory of products from all of the most popular manufacturers including Jeld-Wen, Simpson, Masonite, and others. The company operates distribution outlets in Georgia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Florida, Louisiana, and Texas. Each facility has knowledgeable reps to quickly help customers with orders for the high quality products Dyke customers have come to expect. Dyke has always been a forerunner in the millwork industry because of their belief in 'a quality product at a competitive price in a timely manner.

Recognizing the importance of providing 'Green' building products for its customers as well as practicing 'Green' where it relates to operations, the company has taken steps to recycle much of its waste in different manners to eliminate overfilling landfills.

Growing Complexity of Product Line Required More Capable Software

Prior to implementing the Ponderosa ERP Software, Dyke had been using a legacy AS400-based software product that had been heavily customized for the business over more than 30 years. In the past, when the company's product lines were significantly less complex, the software worked well. As Dyke's product offerings expanded and configuration options proliferated, inventory management became increasingly more important.

Another challenge facing Dyke was that their legacy software was no longer supported by the vendor that had initially set it up, and only a select few employees were still familiar with the software and able to maintain it. Recent internal promotions of personnel experienced in more contemporary software was the final catalyst to a major software upgrade.

Tom Armstrong, President and CEO for Dyke Industries said, "We assigned a team of key users to conduct a thorough review of various solutions and selected Ponderosa from CAI Software (CAI)."

The software is currently being installed at each of Dyke's fourteen sales, production and distribution facilities. The first installation was completed in April of 2016 and the final location is scheduled for March 2018. "At this point, that process is well underway and is very efficient. We're able to bring up a new location in just a few weeks. I think this reflects the level of pre-planning and attention to detail that has been evident since the start of the project. We've seen excellent results where it's live and we're excited to complete the installation process."

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Leveraging Ponderosa's Product Configurator and Shop Scheduler

Each of Dyke's locations consists of a team of outside and inside sales representatives, a 'Custom Shop' that provides sophisticated fabrication services for one-off millwork products, a warehouse with inventory ready for that day's shipments, and a fleet of delivery trucks that are loaded the night before for drivers that arrive in the morning to start their runs.

Sales reps field incoming calls and use Ponderosa's integrated Product Configurator (ProCon) to build out and cost even the most complex door system or window. The software automatically creates a sales order and corresponding production work order, and then emails an acknowledgement to the customer with the expected delivery date.

The Ponderosa software is utilized throughout all areas of the facility. Jerod Panian, Computer Operations Manager for Dyke Industries said, "The software has become integral to every aspect of our business and really feels like it was developed just for us. The time that we spent collaborating with the team at Ponderosa prior to implementation has paid off. Together we identified areas where the software could make our employees more productive and then took the time during the implementation process to make sure the software was as user-friendly as possible. Our team has been able to master the software and hit the ground running."

Ponderosa's integrated Shop Scheduler offers system wide visibility and the software's event-driven emails have been a huge improvement for the company's internal communications. "At the sales desk, we know immediately while creating an order if the shop has the capacity to meet the customer's ship date," Panian said. In addition, their outside salespeople are always alerted to changes to their customer's order or receipt of a Special Order item. They now have complete visibility of all orders, both pending and out for delivery.

"ProCon is a tremendous help in eliminating mistakes and errors of omission when our sales department configures a pre-hung door for their customers," Panian continued. "Our 'build-on-the-fly' configurator walks the sales people through all aspects of the unit to be built, ensuring no details are missed." This has reduced production costs by eliminating costly rebuilds, consolidating "like" orders, alerting staff if the same item is already in stock and fine tuning just-in-time inventory practices. It has improved customer service and satisfaction levels by ensuring that the right product is delivered to the correct production line and then to the correct delivery resource.

Ponderosa's Open Order Status Display lets anyone who answers the phone give a customer the status of their order(s) in seconds regardless of where it is in their process. Panian commented, "The ability to instantaneously tell the customer if an order is in production, waiting on a Special Order PO, or out for delivery is invaluable."

Each Dyke location carries a unique set of products and product options, including wood species, patterns, upsells, and hardware. As a result, the company uses a unique ProCon system for each facility. "We opted to invest the time into customizing the configurator for each location," Panian said. "Seeing it in action and hearing excellent reviews from our employees reinforces that we made the right decision. Ponderosa's flexibility made it a great fit for our company."

Invoicing by the Truckload: A Major Time Saver

Another area that Ponderosa has helped to drive improved efficiency is the ability to invoice customers by the truckload. All interior and exterior doors, windows, and other products are built a day before they are scheduled to be delivered. Trucks are loaded each night to be ready for drivers that arrive for their morning deliveries at 6:00 a.m.

Phase 2 of the project includes the implementation of Ponderosa's integrated Warehouse Management System (WMS) and web-based Sales Portal. The Ponderosa WMS is a real-time inventory control solution that reduces inventory costs and improves efficiency and accuracy in all warehousing and yard management operations.

Dyke's production managers generate and print production orders, work picks, door labels etc. for each day's production. If there are any Special Order items that have not yet been received, the manager is alerted of this up front and does not print those work picks. When the manager completes the order, he notes anything that has been backordered or damaged. Once the truck is loaded and ready to go, the dispatcher is notified of exactly what's on the truck, and prints a delivery ticket for both the customer and the driver.

After the delivery is complete and the driver has returned, dispatchers review each invoice and delivery ticket associated with the truck, and updates the invoice with actual delivered product. The documents are then automatically scanned into DataView, Ponderosa's Document Management System, and are automatically linked to related documentation, i.e. the original quote, order, work pick, etc. This has significantly streamlined a process that was cumbersome in the past.

Collaborative Project and Great Partner

"Everyone at Ponderosa—from the folks who worked with us early on developing an understanding of our business to the knowledgeable people who were on-site with us during the rollout of the software—was absolutely fantastic," Panian said. "They took the extra time and care to tailor the software to handle all the complexities of our diverse businesses."

The company is already planning Phase 2 which will commence in 2018. This phase includes the implementation of Ponderosa's integrated Warehouse Management System (WMS) and web-based Sales Portal. The Ponderosa WMS is a built-in, real-time inventory control solution that reduces inventory costs and improves efficiency and accuracy in all warehousing and yard management operations. The WMS uses wireless, handheld mobile PCs and barcode scanners to track inventory and improve the efficiency and accuracy of stocking, picking, staging, shipping, invoicing and cycle counts from the time materials arrive until they are shipped.

Another initiative will be to implement Ponderosa's web-based Sales Portal. The portal will provide Dyke's customers with secure, 24/7 access to a fully integrated website where they can use ProCon online to configure millwork products, submit quote requests and place orders.

Tom Armstrong said, "We feel like we could not have chosen a better partner and would strongly recommend any business looking to upgrade their business software to look at Ponderosa. "

About Ponderosa
Ponderosa Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Software is a mission-critical, end-to-end solution that helps Lumber and Building Materials Manufacturers, Dealers and Distributors run their businesses more efficiently and profitably by utilizing information from all areas of the business and giving them the ability to track production costs, ensure that the right stock is available at the right time and meet promised delivery dates for production orders utilizing the latest technology and industry-best practices.