Timely Decisions & Lower Costs: Manufacturer Doubles Production Without Doubling Staff

Diamond Foods Inc. has no time for errors or delays. The company’s product line of culinary nuts are seasonal, perishable and time critical. As the leading brand of culinary and in-the-shell nuts in the United States—as well as the top exporter of walnuts to Europe and the Pacific Rim—Diamond must have timely and accurate information.

The Challenge

Paper-based processes made meeting seasonal demand difficult, not only delaying available information, but also introducing opportunities for error. To improve accuracy and gain visibility into its operations, Diamond needed to automate a critical aspect of their supply chain—data collection on the production floor and in the warehouse. That's why Diamond turned to DSI® for a digital supply chain solution.

The Solution

Diamond chose DSI to integrate with Oracle’s JD Edwards EnterpriseOne, Finished Goods Tracking and Diamond’s legacy systems. DSI solutions now allow Diamond to capture real-time data during production and on their warehouse floors, enabling management to make timely decisions and lower costs.

“Our employees get more work done now. We are able to put more product away and run orders back faster for rework or recase,” said Ed DaSilva, Diamond’s Warehouse Senior Lead.

“Single transactions affect multiple systems, which helps us make decisions regarding manufacturing, sales, costs and inventory. We’ve been able to double our production without doubling our staff,” said Ed Hickenbottom, Vice President of Information Technology for Diamond.

DSI guides Diamond’s employees through each transaction’s decision process by limiting the options on the mobile device. This streamlining of processes eliminates mistakes and allows employees to do their jobs more efficiently.

Highlights

- Streamlined digital processes to eliminate mistakes and losses with perishable goods
- Provided total visibility into production and inventory management
- Developed easily adaptable mobile apps that can be updated as business operations change

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The Results

Diamond’s production supervisors can now schedule requirements according to all open order delivery dates. As employees move product on the floor, they scan the barcode and the information is instantaneously available—what was produced, when it was produced, what line it came from and where it is stored. “The more information our supervisors have at their fingertips, the better we can plan production,” said David Baffoni, Diamond’s Director of Manufacturing.

Picking, putaway and other product movement is much faster with DSI® as well. From early September until the end of October, a phenomenal amount of product moves through their facility. DSI helps Diamond keep product moving, track what has already been produced, plan for shift and packaging changeovers to fulfill orders and meet tight shipping deadlines.

Using DSI’s rapid development environment, Diamond’s IT staff can easily adapt the DSI mobile apps as their operational needs change. “DSI offers us the ability to edit every app. This flexibility allows us to respond very quickly to our business community by putting in the changes as they are needed,” said EB VanOtterloo, Programming Manager for Diamond Foods.

Diamond’s warehouse employees can now correct errors as soon as they occur. “The power of DSI is in letting the people actually see the feedback right away and take care of it themselves. Once they get used to that power, they love it,” said VanOtterloo.

DSI gives Diamond the real-time data needed to track the actual costs of producing, moving and selling product. This visibility helps them make better decisions about what to sell and how to sell it. Diamond now has the information they need as soon as work is done. “Our ability to see data as it happens allows us to make management decisions on the fly that have lowered the cost of the Diamond facility,” said Hickenbottom.

Challenges

- Perishable inventory losses due to inefficient processes
- Manual data collection slowed down production
- Lack of visibility led to difficult management decisions

Results

- Immediate visibility improves production planning
- Faster, more accurate product movement
- Employees empowered by real-time data
- Better information yields better strategic decisions

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