



Plymouth Tube Co.

Aptean Axis ERP's Attribute Pricing Improves Customer Service at Plymouth Tube

CASE STUDY

Customer Details

Family-owned. Founded in 1924. 800+ employees. Manufacturer of precision steel tubing.

Industry

Metals

Aptean Solution

Aptean Axis ERP

Challenges

- Manual product pricing considered a serious weakness
- High reliance on service rep experience and "tribal" knowledge
- Pricing process cumbersome
- Inconsistent pricing, customer dissatisfaction

Benefits

- Standardized pricing across all the customer service representatives (CSRs) and situations
- Proper pricing and margins for all customers, locations and products
- Correct and consistent pricing on new products

Challenge: Manual Pricing Process Leads to Customer Frustration

Plymouth Tube Co. (Plymouth) is a global supplier of specialty carbon alloy, nickel alloy, and stainless steel tubing for mechanical, pressure, boiler and hydraulic applications. Family-owned Plymouth is committed to providing quality products and services, with 11 manufacturing plants scattered around the eastern half of the United States.

At one of Plymouth's annual off-site managerial meetings held to share and discuss ideas and concerns, the manual nature of its product pricing process was identified as a serious weakness. Each customer service representative (CSR) prepared quotes based on price sheets, knowledge of the markets, the customers and other often undocumented "tribal knowledge." The process itself was cumbersome, which led to frustrations for both Plymouth and its customers, especially when a back-up CSR was covering for one who was out of the office.

Solution: Utilize Axis' Attribute Pricing Functionality

Axis ERP, an Aptean solution, specifically designed for the metal and wire and cable industries, was chosen roughly 10 years ago as the corporate standard. Plymouth utilizes the product for order entry, shipping, invoicing and shop floor functionality primarily due to its industry-specific functionality. "Axis ERP is built for the metals industry, so it has the functions we need—it just fits," said Cheryl Jeffrey, ERP Business Analyst. "In addition, we saw some of our major raw material

suppliers moving to Axis ERP, so that was a strong recommendation as well.”

Since Axis ERP was previously implemented at all of Plymouth’s locations, the obvious solution to the pricing challenge was to implement the Axis attribute pricing module for sales order management. However, capturing the CSRs’ institutional knowledge and building comprehensive pricing rules presented a challenge. The team worked diligently with the CSRs to analyze their processes, and soon built a pricing model.

Results: Standardized Pricing Improves Customer Satisfaction

“The Axis attribute pricing module allows us to establish specific rules for each customer, location, product and market so that we can include all of the many factors that go into our pricing process,” said Jeffrey. “Standardizing our pricing process by using Axis as a tool has made us more efficient and effective and has eliminated opportunities for manual pricing errors.”

An additional benefit to adding the Axis attribute pricing module is that it reinforces company pricing policies on new products as they emerge. “The system will now tell us if a table is missing or incomplete on a new product,” Jeffrey said, “so we won’t be interrupted in the middle of a quote or quote incorrectly.”

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Cheryl Jeffrey
ERP Business Analyst

Since Plymouth is a highly decentralized company, each plant is given some latitude when it comes to running its shop floor processes. Currently, two of the plants are using Axis for production control, scheduling, etc., and a third is currently implementing the shop floor process. The other eight plants are taking notice of their success and are expected to follow suit. “Ideally, we’ll implement one additional plant each year until all of Plymouth is using the full Axis functionality,” Jeffrey says. It is likely that the plants already using Axis will continue to provide examples of their success and improvements during the annual off-site managerial meetings.

Interested in learning more about Aptean’s Axis ERP? Please contact your account manager or email us at info@aptean.com.



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