

Alliance Thread Tightens the Stitches with MAS 200



CLIENT: Alliance Thread and Supply, Inc.

THE CHALLENGE: A turnkey business management solution to more effectively manage its distribution processes

THE SOLUTION:

- Sage MAS 200 Distribution Suite
- CompuData Network Integration & Internet Security Services
- CompuData Sage MAS 200 Authorized Training

ALAN SHEINBERG, PRESIDENT:

“We have truly enjoyed working with (CompuData) and there hasn’t been anything that they can’t handle. They are close by, came highly recommended, have been extremely responsive and are worth every penny.”

As a result of an abrupt spin off in 2003 from a larger manufacturer of thread and sewing supplies, Alliance Thread and Supply, Inc. found itself in a bind. As a virtually new com-



Alan Sheinberg, President Alliance Thread and Supply, Inc.

pany, quick decisions needed to be made to get its operations up and running. Some of the distributor’s first decisions — and most critical — involved the selection of its computer system and accounting software.

“When we abruptly broke away from the other company and its mainframe system, we built our own makeshift computer system to get our operations underway,” explained Alan Sheinberg, president of Alliance Thread. “We selected QuickBooks for our accounting system and maxed out the application twice with the number of billing and inventory transactions that we were managing in it.”

Alliance Thread handled most of its processes manually with order entries being handwritten. For example, in its warehouse, as a box of thread would come in, it would be weighed, a paper record would be created and copied and then taped to each box. As the inventory would come and go, the paper on

the box would be updated by hand.

“We were really operating in the dark ages,” continued Sheinberg. The company had a poor backup solution, no firewalls or virus protection in place, and was extremely vulnerable to intrusion.

Mending the Tear

After about two and one half years, Alliance Thread knew it needed to make some technological changes. The management team decided to shop around and looked at a number of different options. “It was recommended that we talk to CompuData. During the evaluation process, we found out that one of our valued customers was also using CompuData and spoke very highly of them and the solutions they offer,” said Sheinberg.

“We selected CompuData to assist us with the selection of a new business management application and then the implementation of the solution. Based on our evaluation and CompuData’s recommendations, Alliance Thread decided to implement Sage Software’s MAS 200 Distribution Suite.”

As a \$14 million distributor of thread and sewing supplies including everything from thread and zippers to elastic, webbing and notions, Alliance Thread has 19 employees at its Warminster, Pa. location with sales offices, distribution and warehousing facilities across the United States.

Since its original computer system and applications were extremely outdated, Alliance Thread needed new equipment, which was procured and installed by CompuData. CompuData handled the complete implementation of the MAS 200 system, including the transfer of data from Alliance Thread’s previous QuickBooks solution.

As part of the implementation process,



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Alliance Thread had two employees trained on the MAS 200 Distribution Suite at CompuData's Authorized Training Center in Philadelphia.

Tightening the Stitches

"In a very short period of time, we went from having handwritten inventory to a completely automated system with a very smooth transition," explained Sheinberg. "We had a turnkey system up and running almost right away."

With MAS 200, Alliance Thread now has access to information that it never had before. The Inventory Management module provides insightful data for Alliance Thread regarding the receipt of its products and the movement of its thread and sewing supplies between locations. The distributor can now produce reports with the necessary information to know exactly what inventory it has in stock at any point in time.

Many purchase orders placed are large blanket orders that are shipped over a period of time. "In our business, accurate record-keeping is imperative. MAS 200 is an excellent product that has provided us with a much better record-keeping system," said Sheinberg.

The reporting aspect of MAS 200 allows Alliance Thread to easily produce income statements and profit and loss statements at any given moment and can quickly generate a customer back order report – something that was never possible to do before but is a key aspect to managing any type of distribution business. "We were hard-pressed to get any of these types of reports before we installed MAS 200," added Sheinberg.

Seamless Integration

With the tight integration between the various MAS 200 modules, the new system saves time and reduces errors by automating and

integrating processes, such as purchasing with payables. Before, with the manual process, mistakes were often made and the distributor's business was run (less efficiently). MAS 200 provides Alliance Thread with improved workflow, enhanced data integrity, reliability and the ability for the system to grow with its business.

"It was a Godsend, really," said Sheinberg. "Our purchasing manager came back from CompuData's training session one day and was literally elated to tears because she was so happy that this system would provide her with straightforward access to information she had never before had. The new system would make her job easier and would make all of us much more productive."

Weaving it all Together

In addition to MAS 200, CompuData upgraded Alliance Thread's computer equipment, installed a new server, implemented a daily backup solution, installed the necessary security applications and provided Alliance Thread with a much faster Internet connection. Specializing in the technology needs of small and mid-size businesses for more than 30 years, CompuData was able to come in to Alliance Thread, evaluate its business and propose solutions that fit well with the distributor's business needs.

"CompuData came in and advised us like we were starting a new business but with a \$14 million operation already in place," said Sheinberg. "Their training process is very thorough and they have been extremely responsive and professional addressing any issues, questions or problems. We have truly enjoyed working with them and there hasn't been anything that they can't handle. They are close by, came highly recommended, have been extremely responsive and are worth every penny. I'm glad we made the decision to go with CompuData."