

# A High Wire Act



**CLIENT:** Wire and Cable Specialties, Inc.

**THE CHALLENGE:** Automating business and warehouse processes, managing sales and customer service activities, and creating a scalable and secure infrastructure for a rapidly growing manufacturer

**THE SOLUTION:**

- Sage MAS 200 ERP
- Sage CRM SalesLogix
- AT&T Voice & Data
- AEP Netilla Security Platform
- CompuData Network Integration

**VICE PRESIDENT DOUG**

**CLARK:** "...CompuData's expertise has helped us to leverage technology to streamline our business processes, enabling us to make significant improvements in our productivity."

**You may not think** that manufacturing wire and cable would be big business, but if you look at the growth of a company like Wire and Cable Specialties, Inc., a leading manufacturer of stainless steel, Monel and Inconel wire, strand and cable, in Coatesville and West Chester, Pa., you might think otherwise. Founded over a quarter of a century ago, Wire and Cable Specialties has grown 50 percent in the past two years and almost tripled its sales in the past five years.

One of the primary reasons for the company's success is the growth of the arts and crafts industry. Beadalon, a Wire and Cable Specialties company and trademark, is the originator, innovator and manufacturer of bead stringing wire. It is the only company that makes its own wire, strand and cable for the very popular bead-stringing industry.

The other side of the Wire and Cable Specialties' business is very different from Beadalon, but is also experiencing an increase in demand for its products. American Fishing Wire, another Wire and Cable Specialties company and trademark, manufactures wire, strand and cable to provide wire and rigging products to the fishing industry.

## Tangled Wires & Crossed Cables

To manage the financial side of its rapidly growing business, Wire and Cable Specialties has been running Sage Software's MAS 200 enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution for 10 years. It had pur-

chased the solution from a consultant that was unable to offer custom programming, provided limited support and had very little experience in the Sage Software product line.

Doug Clark, the vice president of Wire and Cable Specialties, is the closest person to a systems administrator on the staff at the company. It was evident to him that he needed the support of an outside expert to maximize the features of MAS 90 in order



to gain a clearer understanding of its operations. It is especially important today now that the company has over 100 employees and continues to grow.

In 2000, Clark came across CompuData at an industry tradeshow and there was no turning back. "We knew we wanted to stay with MAS 90. It has always been a stable product, providing us with reliable information and has grown with us," explained Clark. "We just needed some custom programming and support for MAS 90 that we couldn't get from our prior consultant. CompuData is very accommodating to our needs and extremely proficient in the Sage



Software products. We built a strong relationship with them right from the start.”

### **Re-wiring the System**

In its initial evaluation, CompuData found that Wire and Cable Specialties’ computer system was corrupted. CompuData began working with the manufacturer by re-implementing its MAS 90 solution to ensure it was operating properly. Later, the company upgraded to MAS 200 for additional scalability and stability.

Before MAS 90, the computer system was used only for accounting and invoicing purposes. Its inventory was managed using Lotus spreadsheets and “eyeballs”, making it very difficult to know what was in inventory, on sales orders, or on purchase order at any given time.

Now, with CompuData’s expertise, Wire and Cable Specialties is using a number of MAS 200’s manufacturing modules, including the Sales Order, Inventory Management, Purchase Order, Bill of Materials, and Work Order modules. When a product is manufactured at its West Chester, Pa. manufacturing facility, and is ready to be sold, MAS 200 assigns that product a code and the product then goes to Coatesville for packaging and distribution.

“We automated all of our accounting and much of our warehousing processes and now have a much clearer picture of our business at any point in time. We know what we have manufactured, what is in inventory and what has been sold,” added Clark. “This business intelligence is imperative to the continued success of our company.”

### **Connecting with Customers and Prospects**

As a manufacturing and distribution company that primarily sells through wholesalers, Wire and Cable Specialties was using

Sage Software’s Telemagic sales management solution that was extremely outdated and had not been supported by the vendor for many years.

CompuData moved Wire and Cable Specialties over to the Sage CRM SalesLogix customer relationship management (CRM) solution. “SalesLogix is an excellent sales management tool,” said Mike Shields, the manufacturer’s vice president of Sales & Marketing. “We use SalesLogix to generate and manage all of our business communications, helping us better manage our sales cycle and customer support activities.”

Sage CRM SalesLogix provides a single data repository to manage and access account and contact information, track opportunities throughout the sales cycle, manage team calendars and activities, develop accurate forecasts and effectively report on sales activities.

“SalesLogix provides us with a much more powerful solution,” added Shields. “It is multidimensional and offers us a wide variety of features to manage sales opportunities and campaigns. It also integrates well with our Word and Outlook applications and is a great tool for generating necessary reports on our sales initiatives.”

### **Stringing it All Together**

Once CompuData got Wire and Cable Specialties on track with its MAS 200 solution, the manufacturer began turning to the business and technology solutions provider for networking and hardware projects as well. “Our network was a mess and we found that CompuData could do it all – from supporting our software applications to ensuring we have the best possible voice and data infrastructure in place for our business.”

One major project that CompuData tackled was handling the technology aspect of the



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company's move to its new corporate location for its headquarters in Coatesville while keeping its heavy wire manufacturing facility in West Chester.

CompuData set up the new building in Coatesville and tied the two buildings together with the appropriate voice and data technologies. "As an AT&T Authorized Agent, they even handled our contract with AT&T as our phone vendor," said Clark. "CompuData was able to provide us with a single source solution for our telecommunications needs. They set up a Coatesville to West Chester connection on the phone system and also a point-to-point T1 line between the two locations."

"CompuData had done this before and we knew they could handle it for us," explained Clark. "We needed to ensure that our move was smooth and that our phones and computer systems were in place and working properly upon our arrival at our new facility."

In addition, CompuData provided Wire and Cable Specialties with Internet access, security and firewall solutions as well as implemented a remote access solution for its mobile employees.

Using the AEP Netilla Security Platform, Wire and Cable Specialties' staff has access over the Internet to their applications, files and mission-critical data from any location 24x7. "We have about 10 people that are often on the road for a variety of reasons and they need access to their email as well as the ability to pull up accounts in MAS 200 and SalesLogix. The remote access was the best thing we ever did. It definitely makes us more productive."

### Throwing the Line to an Expert

The Wire and Cable Specialties staff utilized the CompuData Authorized Training Center in Philadelphia for both

MAS 200 and SalesLogix training. "They did a good job at educating us on the solutions and helping us better understand how we can maximize the features in these applications to best meet our needs."

"From its training programs through to its implementation and consulting services, CompuData's expertise has helped us to leverage technology to streamline our business processes, enabling us to make significant improvements in our productivity," said Clark.

"CompuData has been very professional and always responsive," added Clark. "They take care of issues right away and we are always able to rely on them for support. They are also fair and honest and we know that we can trust that they have our best interests in mind when recommending solutions."

"We have a great relationship with CompuData," added Shields. "They continue to provide us with innovative ideas to improve our efficiency and help us save money." ■