

CASE STUDY: ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTOR SMC

Moves From Pen and Paper to Automated Inventory Replenishment

ANDY WOLFE, SMC'S DIRECTOR OF INVENTORY MANAGEMENT SERVICES, NOTICED many of the distributor's accounts followed the same pattern: "Fire drill" scenarios were common. Customers panicked after running out of a product unexpectedly and responded with a large emergency overnight order only to be stuck with too much stock, forgetting to track the product and to be consistent with re-ordering. Then, the process repeated itself.

For Wolfe, the eTurns TrackStock App was the clear solution. "The software gives us analytics and reporting, so we can really tell what the customer is going to need in the future and can keep them from running fire drills," he says.

eTurns TrackStock has shifted the electrical distributor from a manual to an automated approach to Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) services.

eTurns Helped SMC Remove 75% of Procurement Costs on Replenishment Orders

Before eTurns, traditional handshake visits from reps to count stock with a notepad in hand were costly and error-prone. "Manually counting SKUs, writing orders and deciphering notes to put into our ERP system for picking at the warehouse took about an hour. Using eTurns takes 15 minutes," Wolfe says.

The eTurns app can be installed and tracked across mobile devices, allowing versatility in the time of COVID when in-person visits have been upended. "So if we can't get in the building, customers could use the TrackStock app on one of their devices, and they could count the inventory for us to trigger replenishment, which adds a lot of value," Wolfe says.

Not only has eTurns allowed SMC Electric to offer a more accurate and professional service to their customers, but it's saved the company time and has been easy for its team to use at an accessible price point.

Winning With Better Visibility, Functionality and Flexibility

Wolfe didn't arrive at the eTurns solution quickly. In fact, he researched and vetted between 10-15 software solutions before deciding on eTurns. He came across many systems in his research that were designed with complicated add-ons that he didn't need.

"I like the visibility and functionality eTurns gives us. I like that I can put it on anybody's phone and set the permissions for that person and make it simple where they only see the functionality they need to see, but everyone gets better visibility into order status," he says. Everyone from the delivery person to the customer can easily use the app and view inventory status, empowering SMC's team to better serve their partners.

eTurns' adaptability suited SMC's model and budget better than other software systems. "Other systems were just too big and too complicated with things we wouldn't be using at all. eTurns was the right fit for automating VMI replenishment into our e-commerce punchout system," he says.

eTurns Automated and Streamlined SMC's E-commerce Punchout Process

eTurns enabled SMC to seamlessly integrate their existing punchout, e-commerce, and ERP software with eTurns TrackStock mobile replenishment app.

The SMC punchout process involves creating a list of parts in eTurns TrackStock that SMC's customers can buy for an agreed-upon price. TrackStock creates the barcodes for the customer to put on bins of parts in a stockroom. Customers then use the TrackStock app to order or count by scanning the bins of items that need replenishment. SMC taps "submit" on their mobile to send the orders to TrackStock, which are then submitted to SMC's punchout system for replenishment.

As a result, 1) punchout replenishment orders are captured without creating manual errors and with 75% less time spent, 2) SMC and their customers gain increased visibility into inventory status, and 3) procurement costs are reduced by over 75%.

A Replenishment App That Can Grow With You

Wolfe says that eTurns's simplicity makes implementation and training smooth. "I liked the idea that I could get a package that I could be in control over. I also like that eTurns can grow with you," he says. Wolfe feels good about his investment knowing he can level up for more inventory management and replenishment capabilities, such as sensor-managed inventory, as demand from customers grows.

SMC is excited about the added value eTurns will give their customers by keeping stock at the right levels for customers, tracking usage data, streamlining their punchout process and delivering excellent reporting and analytics. "eTurns has helped SMC improve our partnership experience with our customers."

Challenges Faced Before eTurns

- Manual and inaccurate counting with no reporting or analytics
- Time-consuming replenishment process
- Other software options were too big, complicated and expensive
- Needed customers to have an app to replenish items when Covid-19 prevented SMC entry
- Needed to digitize the replenishment orders into their e-commerce punchout system

eTurns Benefits

- Reduces time spent by sales reps by an estimated 75%
- Reduces procurement costs by over 75%
- Replenishment orders are digitized for the e-commerce punchout system
- Sophisticated reporting and analytics so replenishment levels are on target
- Easy-to-use app adds visibility across the organization

About eTurns

eTurns is the leading provider of cloud-based remote inventory management software. We give organizations real-time visibility into inventory at the point-of-use and then we automate replenishment. eTurns also manages tool cribs, asset maintenance, and inventory on service trucks.

About SMC

SMC partners with the industry's top manufacturers for Automation, Data Communications and Security, Electrical, Industrial and Safety, and Fluid Power products and services, while providing customers with the power of knowledgeable support.