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CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Ascentron, Inc.

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Data Collection for MAX brings efficiency to receiving processes and inventory control

Ascentron provides state-of-the-art electronic manufacturing services to customers in the aviation, medical, military, industrial, and instrumentation industries. The company manufactures printed circuit board assemblies, flex circuit board assemblies, electro-mechanical assemblies, and complete products known as box builds. Clients value Ascentron's expertise and service as much as the proven quality and durability of its products.

The 110-employee firm has been using the MAX® Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software from ECI for two decades to drive sustainable and scalable growth. Founders Rick Smith and David Hollingsworth purchased, reinvented, and rebuilt Ascentron out of bankruptcy from an Electronic Manufacturing Services (EMS) company that was a casualty of the high tech industry crash of 2001.

Skyrocketing growth fueled by software technology

Ascentron has grown sales 500% since 2002, weathered the 2008 recession well, and expanded its customer base from the Pacific Northwest to most of the Western United States and beyond. The company supports customers in many regions of the country as well as in Canada, Mexico, Asia, and Europe.

MAX ERP and the Data Collection application from Balance Point have been instrumental in Ascentron's growth story, says IT Manager Kevin Nelson. "Software technology has been critical for our company. We have built our company on being as efficient as humanly possible, as well as on capturing and utilizing solid, reliable data. MAX has played a substantial role in our success."

Nelson came to the company via Harry & David Corporation in 2005. He was hired as the Program Manager, and was later promoted to IT Manager in 2009. He has used his IT training and expertise to work with ECI Software Solutions to use the MAX ERP system's best solutions for his business, including Data Collection.

OVERVIEW
Ascentron, Inc.
www.ascentron.com
White City, Oregon

BUSINESS CHALLENGES:

• The company's long-term goal was to track material and labor costs per job.

• A more granular lot identification capability was needed because of complicated receipt process.

• The kit pull process was slow because of the extensive lot tracking.

BENEFITS OF SWITCHING:

• Data Collection allows them to assign elaborate lot codes to each package received.

• Using the software, they were able to automate the kit pull process to speed up the issuing of parts.

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> Data Collection facilitated our organizational capabilities, in part with its extensive lot tracking and assigning capability... (it) customized our receipt process to the way we do business."

The challenge: improve receiving processes and inventory control

Ascentron currently uses the Data Collection application in the stock room for receiving processes and inventory control. Says Nelson, "Our long-term goal is to keep track of our overall material and labor costs of jobs. When we added Data Collection to supplement MAX ERP, our immediate needs were for functionality that wasn't being met with our other existing software.

"Data Collection facilitated our organizational capabilities, in part with its extensive lot tracking and assigning capability. We needed a little more granular lot identification capability than MAX offered. Data Collection customized our receipt process to the way we do business," Nelson says.

"The solution enables us to assign more elaborate lot codes to each package we receive. We may have multiple packages for one line-item receipt and each one needs to be identified individually, whether it's a reel or a tray or a bag. Because of the more extensive lot tracking, there were challenges during the kit pull process that Data Collection helped to address. Using the software, we were able to automate that process to speed up the issuing of parts to that kit."

The next step: improve efficiency throughout our processes

Nelson also adds, "Data Collection is feature-rich software, and we will implement new functionality going forward. Some of our objectives include being able to assign labor and machine time to jobs, and assign daily work to employees online and give them shop floor tools so they know exactly which jobs to work on, and, when a job is complete, transfer completed parts to finished goods inventory."

ECI helps to manage a successful transition

The ECI team helped to make the transition processes smooth, from employee training to implementation. "From a software point of view, it was a fairly easy integration," Nelson says. "The biggest challenges we had were with internal testing and validation and training, and ECI provided great support in overcoming these challenges. In collaboration with the hardware vendor we were using, ECI also provided assistance in selecting the correct equipment to use in conjunction with the software. Then they facilitated our employee training in both the hardware and software. A software vendor without experience and expertise in our industry would not have been able to offer this level of support."

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> This software can greatly enhance manufacturer efficiency and employee productivity in a variety of ways."

"Since then, whenever we have a problem—which doesn't happen often—ECI takes care of us quickly and helps to resolve issues by email or over the phone."

Looking back on the overall impact of MAX and Data Collection, Nelson reflects, "The areas where it impacted our company the most are employee efficiency, data collection, and removing the burden of how to handle complex receipt process requirements." He adds, "This software can greatly enhance manufacturer efficiency and employee productivity in a variety of ways, and ECI's support helps to expedite the time to successful implementation."

Contact us today to learn more

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