



Hartzell Propeller Streamlines Service Processes with Service Management

SNAPSHOT

Customer: Hartzell Propeller

Location: Piqua, OH

Challenge: Large numbers of components and parts required many work orders containing a lot of information, all with complex interconnections

Solution: RMB Solutions Service Management

Results:

- Helped reduce time to complete some types of service calls from 14 to 5 days
- Greater accuracy and detail in invoicing
- More automation for updating inventory and financial transactions
- Powerful reports for planning and profitability assessment

“We are very pleased with the service we’ve received from RMB Solutions — what they’ve done and in the manner they get it done.”

Keith Huffman

Distribution Manager, Hartzell Propeller



Quality at Hartzell Propeller is a tradition that goes back, way back — all the way to 1917, in fact, when a relationship between Orville Wright and Robert Hartzell led to the manufacture of the first Hartzell propeller.

“We don’t compromise on quality anywhere,” says Keith Huffman, Distribution Manager at Hartzell Factory Service Center. “That’s a given for our kinds of products.”

But while Hartzell Propeller ensures the highest quality standards, they also have to take into account their customers’ demands for lower costs. Today, the pressure to be as efficient as possible has never been greater, as competition from other after-market service organizations heats up.

Hartzell Propeller landed the perfect solution when they implemented a new software package called Service Management. Now, service personnel in departments from the Call Center to technicians to management are using Service Management to streamline service and make them more profitable.

A lot of data to share

The Service Department at Hartzell Propeller is a soup-to-nuts facility, providing everything from basic maintenance to complete overhauls.

“We do everything here: overhauls, repairs, warranty adjudication, basically anything the propeller comes back to us for. Sometimes we receive a whole propeller assembly, sometimes just the parts,” says Keith.

From a software standpoint, that can be tricky. The service management software must exchange zeppelin-sized amounts of information with its MAPICS ERP system, all while maintaining the right relationships between work orders for the various parts.

“What complicates matters is the sheer number of parts, each of which are made up of an elaborate set of components themselves. Some parts repair can have over 50 line items in a work order,” he explains. “On top of that, we have parts that get replaced and parts that get repaired and put back into service.”

“ In some cases, we’ve been able to go from fourteen days to just five to complete some of these service calls. ”

Keith Huffman

Distribution Manager, Hartzell Propeller

Easily managing a complex environment

To manage all this data, Hartzell Propeller used to rely on a legacy MAPICS add-on software. When the product came to the end of its life cycle, they brought in Service Management to not only manage processes but also help improve them.

To begin with, RMB Solutions helped Hartzell set up a system of parent-child work order relationships to manage the various work orders required for the different assemblies, sub-assemblies, and components.

“Service Management produces all the work orders we need, then rolls up all the relevant work orders into the right entity, whether for the whole assembly or sub-assembly,” says Keith.

Making processes more aerodynamic

Next came improved processes to streamline service. A specialist now makes all the big decisions up front, using the system to dispatch the right tasks to the right people. Now technicians update information in Service Management as they complete their tasks, so they can see job status in real time.

“A Search Inspector now assesses products as they come in the door, and makes the major decisions. The Search Inspector downloads an item process record from the ERP, then activates and de-activates various line items based on the scope of work to be done. Tasks then get sent to the appropriate technicians doing the work.”

Each technician has only to login to Service Management to get the complete work orders for their tasks.

“Now, not only have we got better decisions being made, we are much more accurate and up-to-date with our information.”

Reducing time to complete

The new system has helped increase efficiency in service.

“In some cases, we’ve been able to go from fourteen days to just five to complete some of these service calls,” Keith says.

As technicians make their way through the work order, inventory as well as the technicians’ work hours are all automatically recorded.

“At the end of the process we do up our quote, and it contains all the work we’ve done,” he says. “Our Bill of Materials is much more complete. Before, we sometimes had to do manual inventory transactions and other work-arounds — doing away with those has made a measurable difference.”



More accurate invoicing and reporting

The new way of doing things has helped increase accuracy in more ways than one.

“We feel much more confident about our invoicing now. In the past, there was room for things to slip through the cracks. I’m more confident now that every billable part and hour is accurately recorded,” he says.

They’re also now able to get the reports they need to get a clear perspective on the department.

“We have reports that show all the RMAs and their current status, so we know exactly what work is on its way, what work is being performed now, and what’s in queue in receiving,” he says. “I can even drill down to see what kind of work it is — for two-, three-, or four-bladed propellers, for example, which take different amounts of time to do. It’s fantastic to have all this information at our fingertips.”

Bird’s eye view of the business

Keith is also making better business decisions with this new information.

“Another report shows us the dollar-value of the work that’s on the floor. That one is important — when we can accurately identify and go after the work we know we’re good at, then we can improve margins.”

“We are constantly looking at ways we can improve our processes here at Hartzell Propeller,” he concludes. “And Service Management is playing a central role in helping us do that today.”



For more information

To get a personalized demonstration of how Service Management can help you improve profitability in your service department, contact RMB Solutions at sales@rmbolutions.net or at (303) 791-5775.