

TrueCommerce™

CASE STUDY

Winsupply

Powers Its Unique Business Model with TrueCommerce Datalliance VMI

Background

Winsupply Inc. is a leading supplier of materials for residential and commercial construction and industrial uses—everything from plumbing to HVAC to electrical to waterworks and utilities. The privately-held company has nearly 600 wholesaling locations in 45 states and offers entrepreneurs the unique opportunity to own a meaningful part of the local business. Winsupply also provides dedicated support services to help its local companies build and grow successfully.

As part of that support network, Winsupply offers Shared Purchasing Solutions (SPS), an inventory management solution that combines highly skilled and experienced buyers with the power of the TrueCommerce Datalliance Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) and forecasting solution. Winsupply's goal is to help these local businesses improve profitability by optimizing inventory turns, maintaining outstanding fill rates and reducing transaction costs. Winsupply currently provides this service to over 60 local supply houses, with sales ranging from $2 million up to $15 million per location.

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Jonathan Patton
Area Purchasing Manager, Winsupply Shared Purchasing Solutions

Objective

Power a unique business model built entirely on delivering superior inventory management while supporting a distributed workforce that serves a wide range of construction and industrial market segments

Solution

Leverage the reliability, configurability and exceptional support of the TrueCommerce Datalliance Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) solution

"Basically Winsupply provides a consulting service that adds value directly to our local companies' P&L through improved purchasing performance, while also giving them back their time so they can run their business more effectively," explains Jonathan Patton, Area Purchasing Manager. "A significant part of our value comes from how we leverage 'reverse VMI' to place orders with vendors on behalf of our individual supply houses in a way that optimizes inventory levels."

A customer for approximately three years, Winsupply uses TrueCommerce Datalliance in a unique manner. Neither Winsupply's local companies nor their vendors access the TrueCommerce Datalliance software directly. Instead, they pull purchase orders (POs) and other data directly from local companies' ERP systems and then leverage the VMI solution to cost-effectively fulfill their orders through their preferred vendors, while optimizing their inventory.

VMI Helps Winsupply Do Business in Every Direction

The powerful, flexible and easy-to-use analytical capabilities of TrueCommerce VMI helps with "just about everything" in Winsupply's business model.

"We work with many different market segments, such as HVAC and electrical, which are night-and-day different from each other," notes Mr. Patton. "With the highly configurable TrueCommerce VMI software and their absolutely exceptional support team, we're able to meet the purchasing needs of all those different segments."

A Robust, Cost-Effective Software-as-a-Service Solution

The TrueCommerce Datalliance solution is delivered via a managed services model, which greatly reduces upfront costs and the demands on IT departments.

This distributed model is perfect for Winsupply's "road warrior" workforce.

"Just three people work at our company's headquarters, and the rest of our team is spread out nationwide," Mr. Patton states. "We travel a lot and connectivity to TrueCommerce Datalliance is never an issue. Plus we don't have the time, staff or desire to support the software in-house."

In a time-sensitive business where reliability and responsiveness are vitally important, TrueCommerce Datalliance has been more than up to the challenge.

Benefits



Allows local market locations to optimize inventory turns, maintain outstanding fill rates and reduce transaction costs



High configurability enables the VMI software to support radically different construction and industrial market segments

"The VMI solution's reliability and performance for moving data back-and-forth is always top-notch," Mr. Patton stresses. "Over the past three years I can think of maybe one instance where we ran into a challenge with reliability or data transmission, and the support team's responsiveness to resolve the issue was awesome."

Top-level Security and Support that Always Goes Way, Way Above and Beyond

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Top-level security was also an important factor.

"I trust TrueCommerce Datalliance with our data," offers Mr. Patton. "They've done a fantastic job with maintaining information integrity and security."

TrueCommerce Datalliance support also makes it fast and easy to onboard new local companies.

"Anytime we ever have a challenge, TrueCommerce Datalliance support goes way over the top in their ability to deliver not just a solution, but also advice to help move our business forward," Mr. Patton shares. "It's never just 'standard' customer service—they always go way, way above and beyond."

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