

Lee Spring Gets More Bounce Per Ounce with SYSPRO

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■ AT A GLANCE ■

COMPANY

Lee Spring

INDUSTRY

Manufacturing



■ The Company

Lee Spring is a privately held, 80-year old company based in Brooklyn, New York. The company manufactures an extensive line of springs which it sells primarily to OEMs throughout the world. In fact, the company maintains a stock of more than 9,000 different springs, including compression, extension and tension springs, which are produced in five manufacturing plants located across the United States. Lee Spring also produces custom engineered springs for which it holds approximately 50,000 files, including full documentation and specifications. Today, Lee boasts a worldwide customer base that numbers more than 40,000 individual companies.

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- Mike Gisonda
 MIS Manager, Lee Spring

■ The Challenge

A dozen or so years ago, Lee’s extensive stock line of springs, expanding custom fabrication business and growing worldwide customer base forced the company to computerize its operations. However, when in 1999 Lee wanted to add Windows functionality and upgrade its system to support a greater number of concurrent users, the company was shocked to find that its computer software was no longer being supported. In fact, the software company from whom it purchased the system was no longer in business. “Suddenly, we found we had an orphan system,” says Mike Gisonda, Lee’s MIS Manager. “Our only alternative was to go for an entirely new system.”

■ The Solution

Gisonda issued an RFP. One, submitted by Atlanta-based Edgware, a SYSPRO reseller, was of particular interest to Gisonda. The proposal centered on SYSPRO enterprise business software, a modular system that would enable Gisonda to tailor the specific functionality needed by Lee from a variety of interactive manufacturing, accounting and distribution modules. Equally as appealing, the SYSPRO software suited both of Lee’s manufacturing environments – make to stock and build to order. Most importantly, the system’s pricing was competitive. Says Gisonda “SYSPRO was simply the best value for the fit.” After several demonstrations, Gisonda opted for a 96-user SYSPRO system.

Gisonda insisted on a phased system implementation to “iron out any kinks in advance.” The approach proved to be more than justified when not one major problem surfaced when the system went live after several months.



■ The Result

Today, Gisonda's choice of SYSPRO is confirmed daily by the efficiency increases it produces for his company. For example, the system runs a daily MRP that indicates which stock items have fallen below required levels and automatically creates a stock replenishment requisition. The system even helps Lee determine the appropriate min/max inventory levels based on comprehensive sales records.

Lee maintains four sales offices throughout the U.S. The sales staff can send orders to Lee headquarters in Brooklyn via phone, fax or email. When an order is entered into SYSPRO, the system determines if the item ordered is stock or custom. For stock items, the system queries the Lee warehouse nearest to the ship-to destination to determine if sufficient quantities exist to fill the order. If not, the system queries the other Lee warehouses until sufficient stock is located to fill the order. If stock is insufficient to fill the order, the system calculates the next production run of the part, and the customer is notified of a new delivery date. The system will even schedule phased shipments based on a blanket purchase order if this is what the customer wants.

Custom orders, which involve several additional steps, are handled with equal ease. The sales representative simply forwards the custom specification to Lee's Engineering Department, which enters the information into SYSPRO. The system then issues a design specification based upon the most inexpensive solution. For example, the

custom spring might simply involve taking a stock spring and applying a special coating. If the custom product is more complex, the system designs and prices it. At the same time, it issues a bill of materials and maintains the production routes pending the customer's acceptance of the quote. Once the acceptance is received, the system issues a sales order and makes use of the predetermined manufacturing routes – typically based on the plant nearest the customer and/or plant excess capacity.

"With SYSPRO, we can now do things we couldn't do with the old system, such as produce ad hoc reports," says Gisonda. "The system has enabled us to streamline process, such as the automatic issuing of invoices. In addition, it gives us far superior inventory control of both stock and custom springs. We can even handle blanket orders and ship them over time to accommodate customers' schedules," he says. The system has even proven a help to sales. "Our sales people can do inventory queries to determine if the spring is in stock," he adds.

Asked to summarize the effect SYSPRO has had on Lee's business, Gisonda summarizes it in one word "flexibility... The system enables us to be more flexible in meeting the needs of our customers... and isn't this what customer service is all about?"